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TO  
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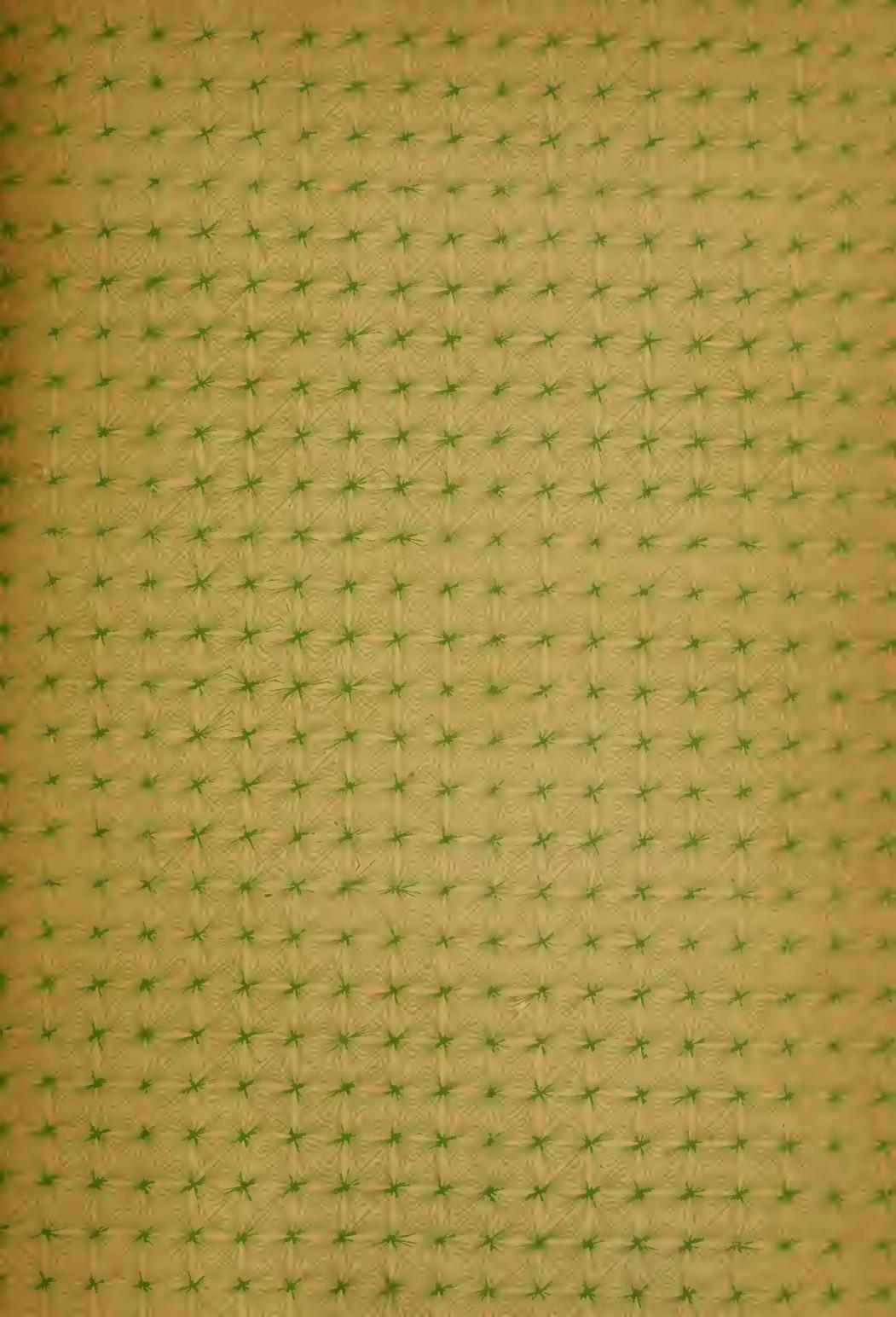
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AMERICAN COMMENTARY

ON THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

EDITED BY

ALVAH HOVEY, D.D., LL.D.

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PHILADELPHIA:

AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY,  
1420 CHESTNUT STREET.



# COMMENTARY

ON THE

## PASTORAL EPISTLES,

FIRST AND SECOND TIMOTHY AND TITUS;

AND THE

EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

BY

H. HARVEY, D. D.

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# PREFACE.

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IN preparing these notes on the Pastoral Epistles and the Epistle to Philemon, I have made the version of King James the basis, in accordance with the general plan of this work, but have also consulted throughout the Revised Version. While all the later Greek texts have been carefully examined, I have found my own judgment best satisfied with that of Westcott and Hort; and this for the most part has been followed. On passages where the reading is still in doubt, I have given a detailed statement of the critical materials for forming a judgment only on the more important; for, while it is sometimes of interest to the general student to know what is the reading in the more celebrated ancient manuscripts, it remains true that only a trained specialist is really competent to form a valuable judgment in textual criticism. In the commentary each paragraph is prefaced by an outline of the thought, and the notes are often accompanied by a full translation or paraphrase of the verse or passage under consideration, designed to indicate the writer's view of the exact meaning. I have throughout supplemented my own interpretation by citing the interpretations of commentators, both ancient and modern, whose proved ability, scholarship, and spiritual insight have given permanent value to their views. This has been done freely, on the supposition that this work will come into the hands of many to whom the writings of these commentators are not accessible, and who would be glad to have access to their views, especially on the more difficult passages. When a topic has required a special and extended discussion, I have placed that discussion in the body of the commentary, and not at the end as an excursus. Closely related as these epistles are to subjects relating to the constitution of the Christian Church and the character and work of the Christian ministry, I should have been glad of more room for special discussion, but the limits assigned me forbade an extended treatment.

The work has occupied for several years the time available to me from the duties of my position in this Seminary. Its imperfections probably no one will see more distinctly than I do. But such as it is, the fruit of no little toil and prayer, I now send it forth on its mission, praying that God will graciously accept it, and will make it helpful to students of his word in enabling them to gain a clearer view of the truths unfolded in these inspired epistles.

H. HARVEY.

*Hamilton Theological Seminary, Sept. 10, 1888.*



# THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

The First and Second Epistles to Timothy and the Epistle to Titus, are called Pastoral Epistles, because addressed to men placed in charge of churches, and occupied chiefly with instruction adapted to those who fill the pastoral office.

### SECTION FIRST.—THE TIME OF WRITING.

Of this, two views have been advocated. One of these, assuming that Paul's martyrdom took place at the close of the Roman imprisonment recorded in the Acts, seeks a place for these epistles within the period described in that book; the other, on the supposition that the apostle was released from that imprisonment, and made missionary tours subsequent to those described in the Acts, places their date within this later period. The former theory is adopted by Lardner, De Wette, Baur, Winer, Wieseler, Davidson; the latter, by Paley, Neander, Huther, Van Oosterzee, Conybeare and Howson, Alford, Farrar, Schaff, and most later writers. The second of these views is to be preferred for the following reasons :

I. THERE IS NO SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE OF PAUL'S MARTYRDOM AT THE CLOSE OF THE ROMAN IMPRISONMENT RECORDED IN THE ACTS.—The record there leaves Paul a prisoner, abruptly closing with the statement : “And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus with all confidence, no man forbidding him.” (Acts 28 : 30, 31.) There is no intimation here, or elsewhere, that this imprisonment terminated in death; the supposition that it did is, therefore, a pure assumption, without Scripture warrant. On the other hand, it seems incredible that, if the apostle then suffered death, Luke should not have recorded so important a fact. It is true, indeed, that Paul, in his farewell discourse to the Ephesian elders, A. D. 58, says : “And now, behold, I *know* (εἰδω) that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more” (Acts 20 : 25); and in this he seems to have a presentiment of his approaching death, precluding the thought of his return to Ephesus and Asia. But this presentiment is plainly offset by the equally strong presentiment expressed several years later, A. D. 62 or 63, in the epistles written during his Roman imprisonment, where, confident of release and of future missionary work, he says : “I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better: nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful to you. And having this confidence, I *know* (εἰδω) that I shall abide and continue with you all for the furtherance and joy of your faith, that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.” (Phil. 1 : 23-26; 2 : 24.) So strong was this confidence that, in writing, about the same time, to Philemon at Colosse, he says : “Withal prepare me also a lodging; for I trust that through your prayers I shall be

given unto you." (Ver. 22.) Plainly, *I know*, when used by Paul as here, of his future personal life in this world, is not intended to indicate omniscient prescience, but to express a strong present presentiment, which may or may not accord with the actual future result. Hence these presentiments with him, as with all men, differed with different moods and circumstances; and they are truthfully thus recorded by the pen of inspiration. On the question, therefore, of Paul's release and subsequent return to Asia, they can have no decisive influence. But the later presentiment, uttered at Rome during his imprisonment, was surely more likely to be correct, because founded on the facts of his then present position.

**II. UNIVERSAL PATRISTIC TRADITION IS IN FAVOR OF HIS RELEASE.**—The testimony is, indeed, not abundant, but it is all of one import. The earliest witness is Clemens Romanus, belonging to the first century, and probably the "Clement" mentioned (Phil. 4 : 3) as one of Paul's "fellow laborers." He writes of Paul: "After having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extremity of the West and testified before rulers, he was thus freed from the world, and passed into the holy place, having shown himself a most eminent example of steadfastness." (*Ep. 1 ad Corinth.* ch. 5.) "The extremity of the West," as used in that period by a writer at Rome, would in all probability refer to Spain. Certainly it could not refer to Rome. It thus indicates, as indeed does the whole expression, a wider range of missionary work than that described in the Acts, and, consequently, a release and an extension westward of his apostolic labors. The next reference is in the Muratorian Canon, a fragment belonging to the last half of the second century, in which, referring to the Acts, the writer says: "Luke relates in detail, to the Most Excellent Theophilus, the events which transpired under his personal supervision, as also, in a separate place, the suffering of Peter; but (omits) the departure of Paul when he set forth from the city to Spain." Eusebius, early in the fourth century, wrote of Paul: "Having, therefore, made a successful defense, report has it that the apostle departed on the ministry of preaching, but having come again to the same city, he was perfected by martyrdom under him." (Nero.) ("Hist. Eccles., II. 22.) Chrysostom, near the close of that century, affirms: Paul, "after having been in Rome, again departed for Spain." (*Ad. 2 Tim.* 4 : 20.) Jerome also, about the same time, referring to the first Roman imprisonment, said: "Paul was dismissed by Nero that he might preach the gospel also in the regions of the West." ("Vir. Illust.") These testimonies, with similar statements of Epiphanius, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Theodoret, though not numerous, are authorities of weight, and, so far as appears, they indicate the common tradition of the early churches. There was evidently no opposing view.

**III. THE PASTORAL EPISTLES, ALL OF WHICH, BY COMMON CONSENT, BELONG TO THE SAME PERIOD, FIND NO PLACE IN THE HISTORIC PERIOD DESCRIBED IN THE ACTS, BUT PRESUPPOSE A LATER PERIOD.**—This may be shown from their historical allusions, from their diction and style, and from the character and circumstances of the churches as indicated in them.

1. *The historical allusions:* (a) At the time of writing the First Epistle to Timothy, Paul had left him at Ephesus, and had gone into Macedonia (1 : 3); but this cannot refer to Paul's first visit to Ephesus, since at that time there was no church at Ephesus, and the apostle, on leaving that city, went, not to Macedonia, but to Jerusalem. (Acts 18 : 19-21.) Nor can it refer to his second visit to Ephesus and three years residence there; for, on leaving Ephesus at that time, he did go to Macedonia. Yet, so far from

Timothy having then been left behind in Ephesus, the apostle had sent him before to Macedonia (Acts 19 : 22); and the salutation (2 Cor. 1 : 1), written soon after, shows that he was with Paul in Macedonia at the writing of that Epistle. And even if Timothy—as some suppose from 1 Cor. 16 : 11—returned to Ephesus before Paul left, then his presence with Paul so soon after in Macedonia is manifestly inconsistent with the whole tenor of the First Epistle to Timothy, as to Paul's intention in leaving him at Ephesus. (b) At the writing of First Timothy, moreover, Paul was expecting soon to return to Ephesus (1 Tim. 3 : 14); but, according to Acts 20, he had no such expectation at the leaving there recorded, but was on his way through Macedonia to Illyricum and Greece; and, as a matter of fact, he did not return to that city. (Acts 20 : 16) (c) In Second Timothy, which was evidently written at Rome not long before his martyrdom, the apostle says: “Erastus abode at Corinth; but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.” “The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.” (4 : 13, 20.) These, and several similar allusions in that Epistle, plainly imply that Paul had very lately been in Corinth and Asia Minor; whereas, if the imprisonment mentioned in the Acts terminated in martyrdom, the Epistle must have been written five or six years after he had left those regions, with which long interval it is impossible to reconcile this language. Moreover, during Paul's last visit to Troas, as recorded (Acts 20 : 6), Timothy was with him, and afterward he repeatedly visited him at Rome. The cloak and book and parchments must have been long since recovered. Nor did he at that time leave Trophimus at Miletum sick; for this person was with him immediately after at Jerusalem, at the time of his arrest.” (Acts 21 : 29.) Plainly, then, these events belong to a later period, and the writing of Second Timothy must be referred to a different and later imprisonment.

2. *The style and diction of these epistles indicate a later period.*—The Pauline Epistles may be separated into four distinct groups, consisting, *the first*, of First and Second Thessalonians, written on the second missionary journey, about A. D. 52, 53; *the second*, of Galatians, First and Second Corinthians, and Romans, written on the third missionary journey, about A. D. 55–58; *the third*, of Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, Philippians, and Hebrews, written during the first Roman imprisonment, about A. D. 61–63; *the fourth*, of First and Second Timothy, and Titus, written, if our view is correct, about A. D. 64–68. Each of these groups of epistles is marked by its own special characteristics, plainly distinguishing it from the rest. These differences were occasioned partly by changes in Paul himself and partly by the difference in character and condition of those to whom they were addressed. Compare, for example, Galatians or Romans, of the second group, with Colossians or Ephesians, in the third group, and even the most superficial reader is conscious of a marked change in the language and style, and feels that the writer is dwelling in new realms of thought, and is dealing with new characters and circumstances. In like manner the Pastoral Epistles occupy a distinct place, alike in their range of thought and in their forms of expression, showing peculiarities which, though wholly Pauline, suggest a change in the writer's mental and spiritual standpoint, as well as in the characters and circumstances with which he is surrounded. The natural explanation of this is that this group of epistles belongs to a later period in the apostle's life, and sprang from the advanced experience then attained by him, and from the changed conditions then existing in the churches.

3. *The character and circumstances of the churches, as presented in these epistles, presuppose a later period.* (a) The church organization has gained a more fixed and

complete form. Instead of the many ministries and gifts seen earlier in the church, as in chapter 12, First Corinthians, two offices only are here emphasized, pastors and deacons; and these appear, at least in the Ephesian Church, as regularly and fully established. Men are aspiring to places in them, and the required qualifications are distinctly specified. No new elements appear. The church is the same in all essential features as in the earlier period, but it has matured so that its form and order are more distinctly defined and fixed. (b) The schismatics and errorists, whom Paul at an earlier period had predicted as about to arise at Ephesus, in these epistles are seen as already present and drawing away the people. When addressing the Ephesian elders at Miletus, he said: "I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:29, 30.) It is evident that, when these epistles were written, the heresies thus predicted had already appeared; and one chief object of the epistles, especially of First Timothy, is to guard Paul's assistants against these heresies, and instruct them how to deal with them. All this, with much more that might be adduced, clearly points to a period later than that embraced in the Aets, as the true epoch to which the composition of these epistles must be referred.

Accepting, then, with the majority of recent scholars, the conclusion that these epistles were written subsequent to the first Roman imprisonment, which terminated about A. D. 63, it remains to inquire the probable dates to be assigned them. Of necessity, these must be more or less conjectural. Second Timothy, it is evident, was written not long before the apostle's death, which, according to the most probable accounts, occurred A. D. 67 or 68; and as these epistles have so much in common, they probably belong to the same general period. The following outline of the apostle's course after the first imprisonment is, at least, not improbable. In accordance with the purpose expressed not long before his release (Phil. 1:26; 2:24; Philem. 22), after that event, A. D. 64, he returned to Macedonia and Asia Minor, visiting and strengthening the churches he had planted. If the statement of the Muratorian Canon and of Chrysostom, with other Fathers, is correct, he then journeyed, perhaps by way of Rome, to Spain, and there labored for a season in the work of evangelization, thus accomplishing the purpose expressed many years before. (Rom. 15:14.) About A. D. 65 or 66, he returns to the East, and labors again at Ephesus; and then, leaving for Macedonia, he writes from that province, A. D. 65 or 66, the First Epistle to Timothy, whom he had left in charge of the Ephesian Church. From Macedonia he seems to have sailed, with Titus, for Crete, spending a season preaching the gospel and organizing churches in that island. Leaving Titus there to complete the work of church organization, he probably returned, by way of Macedonia and Troas, to Ephesus; and, passing thence to Miletus, where he left Trophimus sick, he sailed from that port to Corinth, where Erastus remained. (2 Tim. 4:20.) From some point in this journey he sent, A. D. 66 or 67, the Epistle to Titus, with instructions as to the guidance of affairs in Crete, and direction to come to him at Nicopolis, in Epirus, where he intended to winter. (3:12.) Soon after, perhaps at Nicopolis, he is again arrested, and we next find him at Rome in prison. It was near the close of the bloody Nero's reign; and, instead of dwelling "in his own hired house," as in the former imprisonment, with freedom to preach the gospel, the apostle now, "as a malefactor," is thrust, chained, into a Roman dungeon. Such is the peril of his position that most of his friends forsake him; and when he stood arraigned before the Imperial Court on the first charge in his accusation, he was absolutely alone—all men

forsook him. In the vast throng which, in that august presence, listened to his noble defense of the gospel, no Christian ventured to appear. But the Lord stood with him ; and on that charge he was acquitted. Another charge, however, remained ; and he is remanded to the dungeon to await the new ordeal, which he confidently expects will result in condemnation and death. It was at this point—probably early in the fall, A. D. 67—Paul wrote the Second Epistle to Timothy, exhorting him to hasten his coming to Rome, and giving him his last charge as a minister of the Lord Jesus. At his second trial, according to the tradition, he was condemned to decapitation ; and early in the summer, A. D. 68, the apostle, led forth from the city by the Ostian Way, was beheaded.

#### SECTION SECOND.—THE GENUINENESS.

The Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles was not called in question during the Patristic period, except, as was natural, by some of the Gnostics, who had dogmatic reasons for opposing them. They are quoted as genuine by the Apostolical Fathers, Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, and Polycarp. They are found in the *Peschito Syriac Version*, and in the *Muratorian Canon*, both belonging to the last half of the second century, the one representing the common view of the Oriental churches, the other that of the churches of the West. The latter, in its catalogue of Paul's Epistles, says : “*ad Titum una, et ad Timotheum duar.*” (To Titus one, and to Timothy two.) They were received as genuine by the earlier Fathers, as Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Theophilus, and Tertullian ; all of whom either quote from them, or refer to them, as the writings of Paul. Among the later Fathers the testimony is full and explicit, but need not be cited in detail, since Eusebius, of the fourth century, in his “*Canon of Scriptures*,” ranks these epistles among the *Homologomena*, or sacred writings whose genuineness and inspiration were unquestioned in the orthodox churches. (“*Hist. Eccl.*,” III. 25.) The external proof is absolutely complete ; and through all the Christian ages until a very recent period the Pauline origin of these epistles has been unhesitatingly accepted.

Of late, however, this has been violently assailed, especially in Germany. Schleiermacher led the way by questioning the genuineness of First Timothy. Eichhorn and De Wette denied the Pauline authorship of the three epistles, but placed the date of their composition in the first century and conceded them a place in the New Testament Canon. Baur and the Tübingen school held them as spurious, and assigned them to the second century. Most of those who impugn their genuineness, as Davidson, assign them a place, though secondary, in the New Testament, as the well-meant productions of good men, living near the apostolical age, who wrote under the name of Paul, from a desire to give apostolic authority to doctrines and instructions, in themselves true and useful, and in actual accord with those of the apostle. A full discussion of the question, entering into all its details, would occupy more space than the plan of this work admits. This will be found in other accessible works. See Davidson's “*Introduction to the New Testament*,” where, in the later editions, the arguments against their genuineness are exhaustively presented. Also, Huther's “*Introduction to the Pastoral Epistles*,” in Meyer's “*Commentary*”; Wiesinger's “*Introduction*” to these epistles in “*Olshausen's Commentary*”; and especially the *Prolegomena* to these epistles in Alford's “*Commentary*” (vol. 3, Am. ed.) ; in all of which their Pauline authorship is maintained. A valuable summary of the discussion will be found in Smith's “*Dictionary of the Bible*,” in the article on “*The Epistles to Timothy*.”

The chief objection urged against the genuineness of these epistles may be thus stated :

*First: These epistles in their historic allusions find no place in Paul's life as recorded in the Acts; they cannot, therefore, have been written by him.* This objection rests on the assumption that the apostle's death occurred at the close of the period covered by the Acts—an assumption which, in the above examination of the time of writing these epistles, we have found wholly unwarranted either by Scripture or history. If, as has been shown, Paul was released, and lived several years beyond that period, performing missionary tours and continuing his supervision of the churches, there was ample place in his life for these epistles, and the circumstances they present become every way natural and reasonable. Indeed, this single fact removes almost all the objections to the genuineness of these epistles, by adequately accounting for the historic allusions and the peculiarities they present.

*Second: The language and style are not Pauline.* The epistles do not exhibit that vigor and coherence of thought which are found in Paul's writings; and they contain a considerable number of words and phrases not used in the other epistles ascribed to him. To this it may be replied: Without doubt these epistles have peculiarities which markedly distinguish them from other Pauline writings, but this by no means disproves their genuineness. Such differences would necessarily exist from the circumstances under which they were written. They were composed several years after the others, when the apostle was older and more infirm, and his modes of thought and expression would naturally be modified. They were written, not to churches for public use, but to familiar friends; the elaboration and order which characterize most of his other writings could not here be expected, and would, indeed, be unnatural. The subjects here are, for the most part, different from those treated in the other epistles, rendering necessary the use of new words and phrases. Most of the other epistles were dictated to an amanuensis, whereas these were probably written by his own hand—a fact explaining many of their peculiarities. The difference in diction and style, however, has been greatly exaggerated. In point of fact, the number of peculiar words and phrases is not essentially greater than in some of the acknowledged epistles of Paul. Farrar states the results of research on this point thus: "There are no less than one hundred and eleven peculiar terms in the Epistle to the Romans; one hundred and eighty-six in the two Epistles to the Corinthians; fifty-seven and fifty-four respectively in the short Epistles to the Galatians and Philippians; six even in the few paragraphs addressed to Philemon. It is not, therefore, in the least degree surprising that there should be seventy-four in the First Epistle to Timothy; sixty-seven in the second, and thirteen in that to Titus." ("Life and Work of St. Paul," p. 613, Am. ed.) If, then, we consider the greatly altered circumstances under which the now aged and infirm apostle is writing these letters to his trusted assistants, and the widely different subjects he is treating, it becomes evident that a marked difference of diction and style is to be expected. Were such a difference wanting, this fact might go far to discredit their genuineness. All literature is full of examples of such differences in the same writers, writing at different periods of life, treating of different subjects, and addressing different persons. No man ordinarily writes a letter to a familiar friend with the elaborateness that he would use in a treatise or a public discourse. No author is always at his best. How wide is the gulf, in power and wealth of thought and splendor of diction, between "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained"! The critic, reasoning on merely internal and subjective grounds, would find far more reasons for denying that the latter was written by Milton, than can be adduced for denying Paul's authorship of the Pastoral Epistles. In fact, such criticism is wholly false in principle, and, were it generally

applied, the genuineness of many productions of our best authors would be put in doubt, and no inconsiderable part of our literature be pronounced spurious. Besides, these peculiar words and phrases are the comparatively rare exceptions; the ordinary currents of thought and forms of expression are confessedly those of the acknowledged epistles of Paul; and it is far more difficult to account for this almost universal Pauline cast of thought and expression, which no imitator could possibly produce, than to account for these occasional divergencies from his earlier writings. The hypothesis of forgery in the case of these epistles devolves on its advocate the utterly hopeless task of explaining the all-pervading presence in them of the well-defined, distinctive thought and feeling and expressions of the Apostle Paul—a presence which does not reveal itself merely in occasional coincidences, but colors and permeates the whole substance and spirit of these productions.

*Third: The advanced church organization and the form of the heresies seen in these epistles belong to a period later than the age of Paul.* The church organization, it is said, is an incipient hierarchy, and the heretics are the Gnostics, both of which facts point to the post-apostolic age as the time of composition. Let us examine these objections :

1. *The alleged advanced ecclesiasticism.* (a) Hierarchical tendencies, it is said, appear in the rules relating to the clergy. But if so, it is singular that the terms "bishop" and "elder" are still used as perfectly synonymous, plainly designating the same officer (Titus 1 : 5, 7); that between the bishop and deacon no intermediate officer appears (1 Tim. 3 : 1-8); that no sacerdotal dignity or function is assigned to the clergy; and that there is no hint even of the presiding presbyter in the church college of presbyters, who, as "first among equals" (*primus inter pares*), appears so prominent in the second century: but the presbyters are evidently, as yet, all on the same level. The only advance seen in church organization is that the permanent officers, the pastors and deacons, are made more prominent, while those exercising special functions and miraculous gifts, who appear in the earlier epistles (1 Cor. 12), fall here into the background—an entirely natural fact, on the hypothesis of the composition of these late in the apostle's life. (b) It is farther objected, that the clergy are forbidden to remarry (1 Tim. 3 : 2), and that the term "widows" is used to designate an order of consecrated virgins in the church (1 Tim. 5 : 3-16), both of which point to a state of things which did not arise till the second century. But these objections are based upon a misinterpretation. A careful exegesis will show that the restriction, that the bishop be "the husband of one wife," does not forbid remarriage after the death of a former wife; and that the passage relating to widows not only contains no hint of a body of consecrated virgins, but the only body to which it does refer is one composed of widows maintained by the church, among the conditions of admission to which are that the applicant has been "the wife of one man" and has "brought up children." To interpret the word when, in the immediate connection, it is used of the "younger widows," as meaning virgins, is a gross violation of the law of context, one of the primary principles in exegesis, and is, to the last degree, forced and unnatural. In truth, the church, as seen in these epistles, retains all its original simplicity of organization, and differs from that seen in the earlier epistles only in that its permanent features have become more distinct, while the features that were merely temporary are disappearing.

2. *The alleged later form of the heresies referred to in these epistles.* The language used in describing these, it is said, points to the Gnosticism of the second century. Thus "the oppositions (*ἀντιθέσεις*) of science (*γνώσεως*) falsely so called" (1 Tim. 6 : 20); "forbidding

to marry and commanding to abstain from meats" (4:3); the "endless genealogies" (1:4), and the doctrine "that the resurrection is passed already" (2 Tim. 2:18), are all features of the Gnostic systems, as they appear in the second and in the following century. To this it may be replied: Without question, these false tendencies appear in the later Gnosticism; but it is equally certain that the germs of the Gnostic heresies existed in the apostolic age, especially in the churches of Asia Minor. This is plain from the Epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians, in which, especially the former, these heretical tendencies appear even more distinctly than in the Pastoral Epistles. In this epistle, written as early as A.D. 61-63, the apostle exhorted the Colossians to beware of "philosophy and vain deceit," a "voluntary humility and worshiping of angels," "a show of will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body." (2:8, 18, 23.) But neither here nor in the Pastoral Epistles is there any evidence of a developed system of Gnosticism, as in the second century. These heresies are in their incipiency; and they affiliate even more nearly with Jewish than with Gnostic errors. The heretics aspire to be "teachers of the law" (1 Tim. 1:7); they give "heed to Jewish fables" (Titus 1:14); they are zealous in "strivings about the law" (Titus 3:9); all of which connects them, not with the developed forms of Gnosticism of the second century, but with the perverted Judaism which arose from contact with Oriental theosophy, and which is known to have existed in the first century. The ascetic features, also, of these heresies are more naturally referred to Jewish tendencies; and the doctrine that the resurrection is already passed, being fulfilled in regeneration, is as probably referable to the old Sadduceism.

Finally: The criticism which seeks to set aside the clearest external evidences of the genuineness of these epistles by purely subjective and internal considerations, not only utterly fails, as we have seen, to substantiate these considerations, but is, in its whole procedure, false in principle. It selects and emphasizes a few peculiarities (which certainly the circumstances reasonably explain), and then seeks by these to prove the spuriousness of these epistles; while it ignores the vital and decisive fact, that the pervading spirit, the ordinary type of thought, and the diction in general are essentially Pauline, and bear throughout the impress of the great apostle. Indeed, some of the most characteristic and magnificent Pauline passages, in which it is impossible to doubt his hand, occur in these very epistles. Were a rhetorician selecting from the whole New Testament passages to represent more clearly and forcibly the doctrine and spirit and style of Paul, it would be difficult to find any more suited to his purpose than these epistles afford. Take, for example, such as these: 1 Tim. 1:12-17; 3:14-16; 5:11-16. Titus 1:1-4; 2:11-14; 3:1-7. 2 Tim. 1:3-14; 2:8-14; 4:1-8. They are full of his most characteristic language and forms of thought, and breathe throughout his elevated Christian spirit.

#### SECTION THIRD.—THE LITERATURE.

The literature of the Pastoral Epistles is very extensive; but we shall here note only the more important and accessible works. Among the Reformers, Luther, Melanchthon, and Calvin wrote on them: the commentaries of the last named have great value even at this day, and will be found in the Edinburgh translation of his works. Of the later Continental commentaries, the following should be mentioned: that of Wiesinger, which forms a part of Olshausen's "Commentary"; that of Van Oosterzee, found in Lange's "Commentary," which is specially valuable, alike in its exegetical and in its doctrinal and practical notes; that of Huther, in Meyer's "Commentary," which is of high value, especially in its very satisfactory and exhaustive "Introduction"; that of Beck, "Exposition

of the two Epistles of Paul to Timothy" (*Erklärung der zwei Briefe Pauli an Timotheus*, 1879), an admirable and eminently evangelical exposition; that of Hofmann, "The Epistles of Paul to Titus and Timothy" (*Die Briefe Pauli an Titus und Timotheus*), 1874, which forms a volume in his "New Testament Commentary." "The First Epistle of Paul to Timothy" (*Der erste Briefe Pauli an Timotheus*), von H. Koelling, Berlin, 1882, who shows the Pauline authorship from internal grounds, answering especially the argument from linguistic considerations. The three first named are made accessible to English readers in excellent translations. Of other Continental authors, we may mention Mack, whose "Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles" (*Comm. ueber die Pastoral Briefe*), Tübingen, 1836, represents the Roman Catholic interpretation; Matthies' "Exposition of the Pastoral Epistles," etc. (*Erklärung der Pastoral Briefe, mit. bes. Beziehung auf Authentie und Ort und Zeit der Abfassung*), Griefswald, 1840; and De Wette, whose brief, but learned work (which includes Hebrews) has much value; the most important points in all these, however, will be found in the later works mentioned above.

Of English and American authors, if we pass by the older commentators, whose works have been, for the most part, superseded, we should specially mention the commentaries of Dean Alford, whose "Prolegomena" to these epistles, as well as his notes and critical apparatus, are of special value; of Bishop Ellicott, distinguished for thorough and scholarly exegesis; of Bishop Wordsworth, of less value in exegesis, but very full in patristic learning and citations; of Principal Fairbairn, whose work, entitled "The Pastoral Epistles; The Greek Text and Translation, Expository Notes, and Dissertations," is marked equally by rare good sense and by rich Biblical scholarship; and of Fausset, included in the "Commentary of Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown," which, though brief, is, in commenting on these epistles, remarkably judicious, and gives the results of very careful and scholarly investigation. Of the older commentaries, that of Henry, though lacking in critical value, excels here, as everywhere, in the wealth of its doctrinal, experimental, and practical suggestions; and that of Dr. Gill, though antiquated, is often rich in its recondite (especially rabbinic) learning, and in its profound doctrinal and spiritual insight.

Of general works, we may note as valuable for the understanding of these epistles: Neander's "Planting and Training of the Church" Schaff's "History of the Apostolic Church"; Conybeare and Howson's "Life and Epistles of St. Paul"; Paley's "Horæ Paulinæ." On the genuineness of these epistles, the work of Otto, entitled "The Historical relations of the Pastoral Epistles anew Examined," is remarkable for its full statement of the external evidences; and on the chronology, Wieseler's "Chronology of the Apostolic Times" (*Chronologie des Apost. Zeitalters*) is esteemed as most satisfactory by those who deny a second Roman imprisonment. For discussions on special topics in the epistles, it is hardly necessary to add, see Horne's "Introduction," edited by Tregelles; Smith's Dictionary of the Bible"; Alexander's, Kitto's "Cyclopedias of Biblical Literature"; and McClintock and Strong's "Cyclopedia."



# INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

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## SECTION FIRST.—SKETCH OF TIMOTHY'S LIFE.

Timothy was probably a native of Lystra, in Lycaonia. His father was a Greek, but his mother a Jewess. (Acts 16:1-3.) He was early instructed in the Scriptures, and, under the pious influence of his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, was doubtless trained in the knowledge and observances of the Hebrew religion. (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14, 15.) His conversion seems to have occurred under Paul's ministry, during the apostle's first visit to Lystra, on the first missionary journey (A. D. 48-49); for Paul commonly refers to him as "his own son in the faith." (1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:2.) On the second missionary journey, A. D. 51-54, Timothy, being "well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium," was selected by the apostle as his assistant in the missionary work, and, after his circumcision (Acts 16:3), was formally set apart to the work by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. With this were connected the laying on of Paul's hands as an apostle, imparting the special, miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, and also certain prophetic utterances pointing out his divine call, as in the case of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:2), and perhaps predicting the future usefulness of the youthful minister. (1 Tim. 1:18, 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6.) Thenceforward to the end of Paul's life, he remains the loved and trusted friend and companion of the apostle, associated with him in all the perils and labors and triumphs of his wonderful career; and the latest words of Paul, written just before his martyrdom, were sent to this true and faithful disciple.

Frequent notices of him are found in the Acts and the Pauline Epistles. From Lystra he accompanied Paul through Asia Minor to Macedonia, and assisted in planting the gospel at Philippi (Phil. 2:22) and probably in Thessalonica. At Berea he is left behind, with Silas, when Paul is driven away; and from this place, or from Athens, he was sent back to Thessalonica to guide and strengthen the imperfectly instructed and persecuted church there. (1 Thess. 3:2.) On leaving, he came, with Silas, to Paul at Corinth, where he labored in the establishment of the gospel, as also in the neighboring cities of Achaia. (Acts 18:5; 1 Thess. 3:6.) His name, with that of Silas, is associated with Paul's in the two epistles to the Thessalonians written at Corinth, and his service in that city is mentioned with high commendation. (1 Cor. 1:19.) On the apostle's third missionary journey he is again seen with him at Ephesus; and near the close of the three years spent there, he is sent to Macedonia and Achaia on special service to the churches in those regions. (Acts 19:21, 22; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:11.) Returning, he is present with the apostle when, in Macedonia—probably in the autumn, A. D. 57—the Second Epistle to the Corinthians is written (2 Cor. 1:1); and in the following winter, A. D. 58, he is laboring with Paul at Corinth, when the Epistle to the Romans is written, as he there unites in the salutations sent to friends at Rome. (Rom. 16:21.)

On Paul's return eastward through Macedonia, Timothy was in the company that preceded him from Philippi and waited for him at Troas. (Acts 20 : 5.)

His subsequent course at this time is not indicated. It is not certain whether he accompanied the apostle to Jerusalem, and was with him during the two years imprisonment at Caesarea and the voyage to Rome. But he was with him during the first Roman imprisonment,—A. D. 61-63,—as he is mentioned with glowing eulogy in some of the epistles written at that time (Col. 1 : 1; Philem. 1; Phil. 1 : 1); and in this last epistle Paul speaks of his intention to send him to Philippi for the comforting of the church there. (2 : 19-23.) If the Epistle to the Hebrews belongs to this period, it was probably at this time that Timothy suffered imprisonment at Rome (Heb. 13 : 23), and possibly there, in the presence of the Roman Imperial Court, witnessed the “good confession before many witnesses.” (1 Tim. 6 : 12.) After the release of Paul from the first imprisonment at Rome, A. D. 63 or 64, his career, like that of the apostle, is not certainly known; but A. D. 65 or 66 he is with Paul at Ephesus, and on Paul's passing into Macedonia, Timothy is left behind to act in the apostle's place during his absence. (1 Tim. 1 : 3.) The separation seems to have been one deeply sorrowful to Timothy, who doubtless trembled in view of the responsibilities thus devolved on him. (2 Tim 1 : 4.) At a later period,—in the fall, A. D. 67,—the apostle, then a prisoner at Rome, writes the Second Epistle to Timothy, charging him to hasten his coming to that city and giving to him his farewell counsels. Beyond this, nothing is certainly known respecting this chief assistant of Paul. Whether he actually reached Rome before the apostle's martyrdom, and thus was present to cheer him in the closing scenes, is now unknown. Ecclesiastical tradition, which, however, is colored by hierarchical interest, makes him the first Bishop of Ephesus; but this is in direct conflict with the whole tenor of the Epistle, in which he everywhere appears, not as bishop, but as an assistant of the apostle; nor is there a shadow of support for the tradition in authentic history. He is reported as having suffered martyrdom under Domitian or Trajan.

The character of Timothy, as seen in Scripture, is one of rare beauty. He seems to have suffered, like the apostle, from ill health, probably occasioned by the hardships and privations of the missionary life. It is not improbable that these “often infirmities” tended to depress his spirits (1 Tim. 5 : 23), and led to a certain timidity, which gave occasion for the exhortations of Paul, summoning him to courage and fortitude in the perplexing and responsible posts he occupied. (1 Cor. 16 : 10; 1 Tim. 4 : 12; 2 Tim. 1 : 7.) But nowhere is there any indication of a real failure of faith. From his call at Lystra, A. D. 51, to the end of Paul's life, A. D. 68, he appears as the loved and trusted companion and helper of the apostle, never swerving from the truth of the gospel, never shrinking from the post of toil and danger and suffering, and never failing either in fidelity to the trusts committed to him, or in love and loyalty to Paul or to Paul's great Master.

#### SECTION SECOND.—THE TIME AND OCCASION OF WRITING.

It has already been shown that this Epistle falls within the period between the first and second imprisonment of Paul at Rome, and may probably be dated A. D. 65 or 66. The apostle had been laboring at Ephesus, but, on taking his journey to Macedonia, had left Timothy behind to act in his place in the Ephesian Church. There were two sources of grave anxiety. False teachers were arising in that church, apparently Jewish in their origin, “desiring to be teachers of the law,” who taught that, through austerities and a certain secret knowledge, men attain a higher holiness than through faith in Christ and

works of practical piety. This was accompanied by a debased ethical standard, and a factious, disorganizing spirit. The other matter of anxiety related to the right organization and practical administration of the church by the admission to official station only of duly qualified men; by the proper dispensing of the charities of the church, especially in the case of widows; by the maintenance of quiet obedience to masters on the part of Christian slaves, and by the repression of the inordinate love of earthly gain, which prevailed, especially among the heretical class, in that wealthy and luxurious capital of Proconsular Asia. The position of Timothy—as representative of the apostle in that large and influential church, and as presiding over affairs among elders, some of whom must have been much older than himself—was one of great and delicate responsibility. It was specially important that his power to act by the authority of the apostle be fully authenticated, and he be given clear and explicit instructions for his guidance. Paul, therefore, after reaching Macedonia, sends this Epistle to him, an Epistle which, while admirably adapted for this immediate end, was also fitted to be a guide for church and ministerial action through all after ages.

#### SECTION THIRD.—THE CONTENTS.

No formal, systematic arrangement is found, as was to be expected in an epistle to a personal, familiar friend. The topics follow each other naturally, but apparently without premeditated order.

*Chapter First.*—Address and salutation (1, 2); his purpose in leaving Timothy at Ephesus (3, 4); the character of the false teachers of the law whom he is to withstand (5–7); the excellence and true end of law, which these pervert (8–11); Paul's thankfulness to God for his conversion and call to the ministry, notwithstanding his sin in persecuting the church (12–17); solemn charge to fidelity in his ministry (18–20).

*Chapter Second.*—The duty of public prayer for all men, especially for rulers, grounded on God's provision of mercy for all (1–7); the position and duties of the sexes in public worship (8–15).

*Chapter Third.*—The qualifications required in a bishop (1–7); those required in deacons (8–13); necessity of attending to these instructions, from the dignity of the church as the house of God, and its importance as the pillar and ground of the truth (14–16).

*Chapter Fourth.*—Prediction and description of a departure from the gospel (1–5); foolish and superstitious fables are to be avoided, and practical piety, rather than austerities, to be cultivated (6–10); solemn admonition to personal holiness and ministerial fidelity (11–16).

*Chapter Fifth.*—The spirit and manner in which admonition is to be given (1, 2); the duty of the church in regard to the care of widows (3–16); directions as to the compensation, discipline, and selection of elders (17, 18).

*Chapter Sixth.*—The duties of Christian slaves to their masters (1, 2); the evil character and influence of those who, opposing this instruction, teach a different doctrine (3–5); godliness with contentment great gain (6–10); Timothy, as a minister of God, must pursue high and holy objects (11–16); the rich must not trust in riches, but in God (17–19); solemn closing charge to Timothy to be true to the great trust committed to him, and an invocation of God's grace upon him (20, 21).



# THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

## CHAPTER I.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;

2 Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Saviour, and Christ Jesus our hope; unto Timothy, my true child in faith: 2 Grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Ch. I: 1-2. ADDRESS AND SALUTATION.**—Paul, an apostle by divine commandment, addresses Timothy as his true child in the faith, and invokes on him grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

**1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ.** The word ‘apostle’ signifies: 1. *One sent*—used of messengers sent by the churches (2 Cor. 8:23); of Barnabas and Saul as, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, sent by the church at Antioch to the missionary work (Acts 13:25); and of Christ, as sent by God for the salvation of men. (Heb. 3:1.) 2. *One specially appointed to the apostolic office*, as the Twelve (Luke 16:12-16), and as Paul (Acts 22:14, 15; Gal. 1:1, 11-20.) The word is used here in the second of these senses, designating Paul as one called to the apostolic office, and invested with its authority. Here, however, as Paul’s apostolic authority would not be questioned by Timothy, his companion and fellow laborer, it is not emphasized and proved, as in the Epistles to Corinth and Galatia, but is mentioned to indicate that the Epistle is not simply one of personal friendship, but has also an official character, and to certify to all readers alike the divine authority of the instructions herein given and the official position of Timothy as an authorized assistant and delegate of an apostle. **By (or, according to) the commandment.** Compare Titus 1:3. For this commandment, see Acts 19:15; 22:21; 26:17, 18. **Of God our Saviour.** This expression, which is frequent in the Old Testament, as Ps. 24:5; 51:14; Isa. 45:15, and is occasionally found elsewhere in the New Testament, as Luke 1:47; Jude 25, is used by Paul only in the Pastoral Epistles, and may indicate that they were written at a later period of life than the other Epistles. (1 Tim. 2:3; 4:10; Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4.) The conception, however, of salvation as originating with God

the Father is one common to all his epistles. (Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 1:21.) **And Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope.** All our hope is in him, in what he was and did on earth, what he is for us in heaven, and what he will be, and will do, for us hereafter. Compare Col. 1:27. “Not merely the author of hope, nor the object of it, but its very substance and foundation.” (Ellicott.) “In him alone resides the whole substance of our salvation.” (Calvin.)

**2. Unto Timothy, my own (or, genuine) son in the faith.** This refers to him: 1. As converted under Paul’s ministry, probably during the apostle’s first visit to Lystra. (Acts 14:6-20.) It thus indicates the special spiritual bond which binds him who is the means of conversion to the soul converted, so often referred to in Scripture (1 Cor. 4:14-17; Gal. 4:19); a relation which is represented as indissoluble even by death, and as recognized before God at the last day. (1 Thess. 2:19, 20.) It will then constitute the Christian’s “crown of rejoicing”; his “glory and joy.” 2. As faithful to the doctrines and work of Paul, a true representative of the apostle’s life and spirit and teachings, and thus, as bearing his spiritual likeness, his “genuine son in the faith.” **Grace, mercy, and peace.** This invocation of a threefold blessing, asking mercy as well as grace and peace, is found only in the Pastoral Epistles (2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4; and in 2 John 3); a fact which, so far from disproving the Pauline authorship of these epistles, is a strong proof of their genuineness; for no imitator, in a place so conspicuous as the salutation, would have made so marked a deviation from the apostle’s well-known form. It is far more natural to think that Paul, writing in his old age to assistants specially beloved, and for whom he felt the keenest solicitude, inserted the additional prayer for “mercy,” as springing from his own enlarged experience

3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,  
4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies,

and his deep interest in them. 'Grace,' in the language of Paul, denotes God's free, unmerited favor. 'Mercy and peace' are the twofold manifestations of that favor; the former objectively, in justification, forgiveness, or remission of sin, and adoption into God's family; the latter subjectively, in regeneration and sanctification, the peace which flows from a consciousness of reconciliation and union with God. The whole expression is designed to invoke on Timothy all the fullness of blessing which comes through the gospel. **From God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.** The union of Christ with the Father, above in the commission of Paul as an apostle, and here in this invocation, of necessity involves his co-equal divinity; to place a creature, even the most exalted conceivable, thus side by side with the Infinite God, would be impious. God alone can stand to us in the relations and fulfill the offices here indicated. "Our Lord Jesus Christ is undoubtedly and undeniably God, because he is our hope and trust; now, if he were no more than a man, though never so excellent, to make him 'our hope' would be to make ourselves miserable; for 'cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm.' (Jer. 17:5.)" (Burkitt.)

**3-4. TIMOTHY EXHORTED TO REMAIN AT EPHESUS.**—As Paul, when going to Macedonia, had urged Timothy to remain at Ephesus, that he might hold in check certain heresies and false tendencies, so now also he wills that he continue there for that purpose.

**3. As I besought thee.** Mark the tenderness and gentleness of Paul to his assistant; he did not command, but he besought him. It implies, perhaps, some reluctance on the part of Timothy to be separated from the apostle, and to assume a position responsible and difficult as that of the representative of the apostle in this great city. **When I went unto** (or, *was setting out for*) **Macedonia.** The expression does not absolutely decide that the apostle was at Ephesus when he thus besought Timothy; but, taken with the context, this is certainly the natural interpretation. **To abide still in Ephesus.** Timothy was then at Ephesus,

3 As I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus, when I was going into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine, 4 neither to give heed to fables and endless genealogies,

and the apostle desires him to remain there. This journey of Paul to Macedonia, therefore, cannot be the one referred to in Acts 20:1; for at that time Timothy was not left at Ephesus, but had been sent before to Macedonia (Acts 19:22), where he evidently remained after the apostle's coming, since he is associated with Paul in the salutation of the Second Epistle to Corinth, which was soon after written from Macedonia. (2 Cor. 1:1.) **That thou mightest charge some.** He is to hold in check certain persons in regard to the following things: **That they teach no other doctrine**—that is, no different, opposing doctrine to that taught by Paul. It thus appears that it was among the teachers of the church these dangerous tendencies existed, and that the prophecy of the apostle, uttered eight years before, while taking leave of the elders of Ephesus, was already fulfilled when he said: "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts 20:30.)

**4. Nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies.** These fables (*μύθοι*), without adequate reason, have been referred to the speculations of that Gnosticism which prevailed in the second century, whereas they seem plainly to have been Jewish. They are described in ch. 4:7, as "profane and old wives' fables," and in Titus 1:14 as "Jewish fables." Probably they were such as abound in the Rabbinic writings and which, as contemporary writers, Philo and Josephus, show, prevailed especially among the Oriental Jews. The 'endless genealogies' have been variously explained: (a) Of the emanations of *aeons*, as taught in the later Gnosticism; thus Irenaeus and Tertullian among the Fathers and many modern expositors; (b) of Jewish genealogies, such as are found in the Old Testament, but especially in the Rabbinical books, and to which the Oriental Jews gave an allegorical interpretation. The latter seems the more probable view, as in Titus 3:9 these genealogies are connected with "strivings about the law." From the standpoint of the Judaizing Christians, these genealogies, showing descent from Abraham

which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: *so do.*

5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling:

the which minister questionings, rather than a dispensation of God which is in faith; *so do I now.* But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned: from which things some having swerved have turned aside unto

<sup>1</sup> Or, stewardship.....<sup>2</sup> Gr. missed the mark.

and a consequent claim to the promises made to him, were of supreme importance; but, as Herod had caused the public registers of genealogies formerly kept in the Temple to be destroyed, and there were now no means of verifying them, the difficulties respecting them must needs be 'endless,' and the discussion of them, while leading to no useful result, would minister only to strifes. Thus, in substance, Van Oosterzee, Wordsworth, Ellicott, and Alford. **The which** (*they being such as*) **minister questions** (*controversies*) **rather than godly edifying** (*or, the dispensation of God*) **which is in faith.** The reason for holding in check these false tendencies: they serve to foster the spirit of controversy, but fail to supply truth, that food of the soul which God dispenses in the gospel, and which is received only in faith. This alone has real worth; for only through divine truth are the souls of men regenerated and sanctified. (*1 Peter 1: 23; John 17: 17.*) *The dispensation of God* is the reading found in all the older manuscripts, and sustained by all the best editors; 'godly edifying' rests upon no critical authority.

**5-7. THE FALSE TEACHERS OF THE LAW DESCRIBED.**—The design or end of the message with which Timothy is charged is love, springing from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a genuine faith; but the false teachers, because failing of these qualities, have turned aside to empty, disputatious talk; and while desiring to be accounted teachers of the law, they understand neither their own speculations, nor the nature and end of the law of which they so strongly affirm.

**5. But**—in contrast with the end or tendency of the fables and genealogies referred to above. **The end of the commandment**—or, charge; the *aim, scope, or purpose* of the charge committed to Timothy; namely, the message and work of the Christian ministry in their practical bearing on character and life. **Is charity** (*or, love*). To awaken and foster love is the aim and tendency of the

gospel message; whereas, these idle questions tend only to strife and hatred. (*2 Tim. 2: 23.*) **"Love is the fulfilling of the law."** (*Rom. 13: 10.*) It is the supreme, crowning grace of Christian character, the beauty and power and perpetuity of which are elsewhere so graphically depicted by our apostle. (*1 Cor. 13.*) It is, therefore, the grand result which all true preaching seeks. "The highest aim of all the labor of a Christian preacher should be a practical one; namely, to call forth true love." (Olshausen.) The love, thus developed, springs **out of** (*1*) **a pure heart**; a heart made pure in affection and single in purpose by faith. This purity of heart, which the Scriptures represent as essential to true religion (*Matt. 5: 8; 2 Tim. 2: 22; Titus 1: 15*) is constantly ascribed to faith as its means. "Purifying their hearts by faith." (*Acts 15: 9.*) (*2*) **A good conscience**—either a conscience pure in conscious rectitude of motive, as was Paul's even before his conversion (*Acts 23: 1; 26: 9.*) or a conscience made free from the sense of guilt through justification in Christ's blood, and consequently acting in the light and under the inspirings of the Holy Spirit. (*Rom. 9: 1.*) The latter is probably intended, as this is the constant conception of Paul, with whom a quickened, spiritualized conscience is always the effect of justification. (*Rom. 7: 6; Heb. 9: 14; 10: 22.*) "A conscience unreconciled to God and man cannot love purely, because it cannot believe." (De Wette.) (*3*) **Faith unfeigned**—genuine faith, as opposed to that which is pretended, hypocritical. The heart and conscience, the whole moral and spiritual life, thus pervaded, purified, and uplifted by a genuine faith, becomes a fountain of love, from which a life of love issues. In such souls "the law of the Spirit of life" dominates, and, as the result, they are "spiritually minded," and "living in the Spirit" they are "led by the Spirit." (*Rom. 8: 6, 9, 15.*)

**6. From** (*or, of*) **which** (qualities of heart and conscience and faith) **some having swerved**—literally, *haring missed*, as of those who miss a mark. They pretend to him at the

7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully:

9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for

7 vain talking; desiring to be teachers of the law, though they understand neither what they say, nor 8 whereof they confidently affirm. But we know that 9 the law is good, if a man use it lawfully, as knowing this, that law is not made for a righteous man, but

mark, but instead **have turned aside unto vain jangling**—empty, senseless, and disputatious talk. The ‘vain janglings’ here spoken of finds abundant illustration in the Rabbinical writings, which are full of absurd stories and speculations. Observe: it was the failure in these moral qualities which led to their perversion of the gospel in preaching. The heart is the real source of error in religion. Sin blinds the spiritual perceptions and perverts the spiritual judgment. All false religious tendencies originate in a perverted heart. See Matt. 7: 22, 23; Rom. 16: 17, 18; 2 Thess. 2: 11, 12; Titus 1: 10; 2 Peter 2: 3.

**7. Desiring to be teachers of the law.** They wished to be regarded as teachers of the law, to be “called Rabbi,” **though** (from lack of these moral qualities) **understanding neither what they say**—that is, the real import of the assertions they make—**nor whereof they affirm.** Darkened in spiritual perception, they failed of a clear apprehension alike of the true nature and scope of their own speculations, and of the law itself, respecting which they so confidently affirmed. Plainly the teachers of the law here are not the Judaizers opposed in Romans, Galatians, and the earlier epistles of Paul. Here he is dealing, as Alford well says, “with men who corrupted the material enactments of the moral law, and founded on Judaism, not assertions of its obligation, but idle fables and allegories, letting in latitude of morals and unholiness of life. It is against this *abuse of the law* that his arguments are directed; no formal question arises of the *obligation* of the law; these men struck by their interpretation at the root of the divine law itself.”

The general thought of the paragraph is summed up by Scott: “The design of the gospel is not answered by speculation and solving abstract questions, or giving heed to fables and endless disputations; but when sinners, through repentance toward God and faith in Christ Jesus, are brought to the habitual exercise of holy love, out of ‘a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.’ All doctrines, ordinances, and forms are just

so far beneficial to us as they are useful in producing this effect in our hearts and lives; and all that faith is dead which does not thus influence men to love God and each other, in a practical manner.”

**8-11. THE DIVINE LAW, THOUGH THUS PERVERTED, HAS ITS RIGHT USE, ACCORDING TO THE GOSPEL.**—The law is morally excellent, if used (by the teacher) according to its true purpose, since, according to the gospel, the law has its proper application, not to the righteous, but to the wicked. “It was not made to fetter conscience by vain and troublesome austerities and ceremonies; it was to restrain and bind the wicked.”

**8. But we know**—Paul’s usual method of affirming a general truth which all must concede; it is probably used here concessively. **That the law is good**—not useful merely, but morally excellent; good in itself, and of good tendency. (Rom. 7: 12-16). **If a man use it lawfully**—that is, conformably to its true design. As if he had said: “We concede, as all must, that the law is in itself good; but, in teaching, it must be used in a manner conformably to its design.” It was not intended as a means of the sanctification of saints, but as a means of conviction and warning for the wicked. It cannot, therefore, be that means of higher Christian experience and life which these false teachers would make it. The teacher, therefore, is to use it conformably to its true intention.

**9. Knowing this, that the law is not made**—is not enacted, appointed, does not exist—**for a righteous man**, a Christian, who has been constituted righteous by justification, and is righteous by virtue of regeneration and sanctification. “Since, according to the invariable doctrine of the apostle, all who are under the law are also under the curse of the law, so that by the works of the law no flesh can be justified (Gal. 3: 10; Rom. 3: 20), it follows that by the righteous a Christian man must be meant, one who has been justified by faith in Christ, and wholly renewed by the Holy Spirit. Of such a man, Paul says that the law was not made for him.” (Van Oos-

the ungodly and for sinners, for unholv and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

for the lawless and unruly, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholv and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10 for fornicators, for abusers of themselves with men, for men-stealers, for liars, for false swearers, and if there be any other thing contrary to the <sup>2</sup> sound <sup>3</sup> doctrine; according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

1 Or, smiters.....2 Gr. *healthful* .....3 Or, *teaching*.

terzee.) The question here is not whether the law, especially as interpreted by Christianity, does or does not contain for Christians a rule of life; on this the apostle here says nothing. But he affirms that the law is not the divinely appointed means of sanctification, or of a higher Christian life, and that consequently the false teachers, in attributing to the law such a function, are using it contrary to its design. In other words, he denies that the office of the law is to sanctify—a position he has clearly proved and illustrated in Rom, 7:4-25, where he shows that the effect of law is to awaken and intensify the sin-principle, and not to destroy it.

Those for whom the law is designed are now described under two general classes, following the order of the Decalogue: 1. *Sinners as arrayed against God: But for the lawless and disobedient*—those who refuse to be bound by any law, and who submit to no higher authority. (Titus 1:6, 10.) 2. *For the ungodly and for sinners*—the impious and sinful; in nature and in act opposers of God.

**For unholv and profane persons**—those who are impure in life and irreverent toward that which is sacred; men who in spirit and in character are the moral opposites of the divine purity and sanctity. 2. *Sinners as arrayed against society: For murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers.* It is probable, as Ellicott, Alford, and Huther suggest, that this should be rendered *father smiters* and *mother smiters*, since parricide and matricide were crimes very rare even among the heathen, and the original words are clearly used in this modified sense in the classics. This form of sin against the fifth commandment is forbidden. “He that smiteth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death.” (Exod. 21:15.) **For manslayers**—murderers.

10. **For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind**—such as commit sins of uncleanness forbidden in the

seventh commandment, as fornicators and Sodomites. (Rom. 1:27; 1 Cor. 6:9.) **For menstealers**—a common crime among the heathen; kidnapping men for slaves, for which the law prescribed the penalty of death. (Ex. 21:16.) **For liars, for perjured persons** (or, *false swearers*), denounced in the ninth commandment, and especially in Lev. 19:12. A false sweare designates both him who swears to that which is false and him who proves false to his oath. **And if there be any other thing**—intended to show that the law is against those who commit *any* form of sin, though not here specially mentioned. **Contrary to sound doctrine.** ‘Sound’ is, in the sense here intended, a word peculiar to the Pastoral Epistles. In its literal use it denotes *that which is healthy*, and also *that which is healthful*. Here, therefore, it characterizes teaching, not so much as respects its correctness, accuracy, although this is involved; but rather as respects its moral healthfulness, its tendency to lead to holiness of heart and life.

11. **According to the glorious gospel** (or, *gospel of the glory*) **of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.** The gospel is the manifestation of the glory of the blessed God, since it is the highest revelation of his glorious nature and attributes. (2 Cor. 4:4, 6.) This verse qualifies the whole preceding statement, and affirms that, according to the gospel, the law is not enacted for the righteous, but for the lawless. The passage, thus interpreted, accords with Paul’s doctrine of the law, as unfolded in Romans and Galatians, in which he insists that the office of the law, among sinful men, is to reveal sin, and thus awaken and convict the sinner. “By the law is the knowledge (*ἐπιγνώσις*) of sin.” (Rom. 3:19, 20; Gal. 3:19, 24.) He denies that the law has power either to justify or sanctify the soul; this is accomplished only by faith in Christ. (Gal. 2:16; Rom. 7:9, 10.) But the believer, though neither justified nor sanctified by the

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

12 I thank him who enabled me even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, appointing me to his service; though I was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: howbeit I

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read enableth.

law, is yet, by virtue of the new life-power, received by faith, rising to conformity to law—a conformity which constitutes the true goal of all the processes of salvation begun within him by “the Spirit of life.” “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, *that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us*, who walk (in that we walk) not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” (Rom. 8:3, 4.) The divine law, therefore, though not intended for Christians, as a restraining and penal power, does yet, in its essential nature as an expression of God’s holiness, constitute an ideal of righteousness, to which their character and life will be conformed by the life-working power of the gospel.

The thought of the passage, then, may be thus stated: The law, as allegorically interpreted by these false teachers, is not, as they affirm, a higher means of moral perfection for believers than the gospel; so far is this from being true, the law was not enacted for the Christian, the justified man, as a means of moral perfection, but for the sinner as a means of awakening, conviction, and judgment.

**12-17. THANKSGIVING FOR HIS CALL TO THE MINISTRY, AND FOR THE MERCY SHOWN IN HIS CONVERSION.**—As one intrusted with the gospel, the apostle renders thanks to Christ for his calling to the ministry, especially in view of his unworthiness as having been before a cruel, blaspheming persecutor. He explains that in his case mercy was possible, because, in thus persecuting, he had not sinned willfully by acting in conscious, deliberate opposition to his convictions, though he is nevertheless the chief of sinners; and that the design of the mercy thus bestowed was to exhibit in him, as the chief of sinners, the greatness of Christ’s long suffering, and thus through all the ages to encourage the greatest of sinners to believe on Christ unto eternal life.

**12. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me.** ‘Enabled,’ empow-

ered me, filled me with power; referring, not to official authority, nor to miraculous gifts, but to spiritual power. (Acts 9:22; Eph. 6:10; Phil. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:1; 4:17.) “Endued with power from on high,” he had been filled with the divine knowledge, wisdom, courage, patience, and faith, requisite for the great trust committed to him; a power which was promised, and has ever been given, by the ascended Lord to his chosen ministry. (John 14:15-17, 25; 16:7-15.) **For that (because) he counted me faithful, putting (as shown in that he put) me into the (a) ministry.** This was the subject, or occasion of his thanksgiving. ‘He counted me faithful’ may refer to Christ’s designation of him to the apostolic work at the time of his conversion (Acts 26:12-18); if so, he gives thanks for the confidence thus expressed in his future fidelity. Or, as Paul did not actually enter on his distinctive work as an apostle till some years after his conversion (Acts 13:1-4), when his fidelity had already been tested, he may refer to this later epoch, when he was publicly recognized as an apostle, as the time when Christ, having thus proved him, counted him faithful, putting him into a ministry—that of apostle to the Gentiles.

**13. Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious**—that is, notwithstanding I was before one who blasphemed the name of Jesus, persecuted his followers, and, in word and deed, subjected them to insult and outrage. The apostle confessed before Festus: “Many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.” (Acts 26:11, 12.) Such had been the greatness of his sin; but, notwithstanding this, Christ had not only forgiven him, but had also appointed him to an exalted ministry in that very church he once thus outraged and destroyed. **But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in un-**

14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief; and the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ. Faithful is the saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom

**belief.** The reason mercy was possible in his case was that he was not self-hardened by conscious and persistent resistance of the Holy Spirit. He had not sinned willfully, after receiving a knowledge of the truth; but rather as blinded by ignorance in the darkness of unbelief. (Acts 3:17.) Consequently, though he was deeply guilty for that unbelief, repentance was still possible, and, subjectively, he stood within the pale of mercy. There is here no thought of extenuating his guilt, but only an explanation of the fact that, being so great a sinner, he could still find mercy. He had not committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, as those who have persistently resisted the clear convictions of their own consciences and the illumination and urgencies of the Spirit of God; and therefore, great as his guilt was, his moral nature had not reached that point of utter self-hardening, where repentance and faith are forever impossible, and the sin becomes that which "shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." (Matt. 12:31, 32.)

**14. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant** (or, *superabounded*)—it revealed itself in my case, not in an ordinary, but in an extraordinary act of mercy. In its fullness, it far surpassed the grace shown to ordinary sinners. "The metaphor is derived from a stream. I by my sins obstructed the course of God's grace, but the stream of his mercy brimmed over and overflowed the mounds and dams of my sinfulness, by the surpassing exuberance, copiousness, and power of its spiritual inundation." (Wordsworth.) **With faith and love**—the subjective concomitants and results of the flood of grace. The apostle comprehends in faith and love all the actuating principles or motive forces in Christian character, and here, as is his wont, traces them directly to their source, the grace of the Lord. (1 Cor. 15:10; Eph. 3:8.) **Which is in Christ Jesus**—that is, the love Paul exercises toward others originated in, and was kept alive through his union with Christ Jesus. Love to men has its source, and finds its power only in a believing apprehension of Christ's

love to us. All genuine fruitage in the branches comes from Christ, the vine. (John 15:1-5.)

**15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation**—an expression used to give solemnity and emphasis to the following statement, as worthy of the utmost attention and confidence. Paul uses it only in the Pastoral Epistles. (1 Tim. 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8.) It may be classed, therefore, with a few other peculiar phrases, among the indications that these epistles were written at a later period than the others, and in near connection with each other. It is an expression eminently befitting Paul, the aged, attesting his sense, from the experience of advancing years, of the certainty and worth of the great facts of the gospel. **That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.** This is the word which is worthy of all acceptance. The emphasis is on 'sinners,' indicating this, as the source of his joy and hope, as well as the joy and hope of all men, that Christ "came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance," to seek and to "save that which was lost." 'Came into the world': note the allusion to Christ's pre-existence before "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1:1-14.) **Of whom I am chief.** This was true of Paul. 1. As the testimony of his own consciousness. The profound insight given him into his own heart must have produced in him, as such insight has always produced in the Christian, the feeling that surely no other could have sinned so grievously as himself. The publican, when standing before God, convicted of sin, cried, "God be merciful to me, *the sinner!*" See Luke 18:13, Revised Version, margin. He seems to have been so utterly absorbed in the consciousness of his own sin, that he thought of himself as the only sinner, his own sin filling the whole horizon of his mind. In like manner Paul, with clear insight into his own heart and with quickened sense of the holiness of God, truly feels that he is chief of sinners, surpassing all others in the turpitude and greatness of his guilt. And 2. As a matter of fact, none had surpassed, perhaps none had equaled him, in

16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Gr. of the ages.....2 Gr. unto the ages of the ages.

the boldness and fury with which he had persecuted the church, and defiantly opposed the Lord Jesus. This last is probably the prominent thought here.

**16. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy.** He now unfolds the special purpose of Christ, as it respects men, in thus showing mercy to him, the greatest of all sinners; it was to show, in this case, to all future ages the boundlessness of mercy in the gospel, and thus encourage even the worst sinners to seek it in Christ. **That in me first**—that is, as the first or chief of sinners, the one who surpassed all others in sin. **Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering**—the full, boundless extent of it; that, in being shown to me, the chief sinner, the long suffering of Christ might find the highest possible exemplification. **For a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.** The purpose was to set before sinners in all after ages an example of the marvelous extent of Christ's patience and mercy, in the long suffering and grace shown to him, to the end that even the worst of sinners may be emboldened to believe in Christ 'to everlasting life.' If the Lord saved Paul, then no sinner need despair. "No man, with Paul's example before him, can reasonably question the love and power of Christ to save him, whatever his sins have been, if he really desire and endeavor to trust him as the Incarnate Son of God, who once died on the cross and now reigns on the throne of glory, in order to save all who come unto God through him." (Scott.) A different view is urged by Hofmann, and is perhaps worthy of consideration. It is as follows: *To me first*—that is, *first*, not by eminence, but in time. Paul was first in a long line of blaspheming, persecuting sinners, to whom Christ would show his long suffering and mercy. Under the Old Dispensation, judgment had *speedily* fallen on opposers, but now, under Christ, mercy would wait and would bring even the greatest sinners to repentance. Paul was thus a pattern or

16 I am the chief: howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me as chief might Jesus Christ show forth all his longsuffering, for an ensample of them who should thereafter believe on him unto eternal life. Now unto the King <sup>1</sup>eternal, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory,<sup>2</sup> for ever and ever. Amen.

ensample, not *to*, but, as the text says, "of those who should hereafter believe on him." Christ's mercy to him, therefore, was only the beginning of a long series of like exhibitions of his mercy.

**17. Now unto the King eternal** (or, *of the ages*, Revised Version, margin), designating God as the infinite Former and Controller of the periods or cycles through which the universe has passed or will hereafter pass. It is equivalent, therefore, to King of Eternity. "He is presented to our view as supreme Lord and Director of the successive cycles or stages of development through which this world, or the creation at large, was destined to pass—the Sovereign Epoch-maker, who arranges everything pertaining to them beforehand, according to the counsel of his own will, and controls whatever takes place, so as to subordinate it to his design." (Fairbairn on Ps. 145:13.) **Immortal** (or, *incorruptible*)—imperishable, undecaying, as 6:16, "who only hath immortality." **Invisible**—"dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see." (6:16.) **The only wise God**—the only true, real God. (Deut. 4:35; Isa. 44:6.) 'Wise' is not in the best manuscripts. **Be honour and glory for ever and ever** (or, *unto the ages of the ages*). **Amen**—that is, *unto eternity*, the infinite future being considered as a series of periods, or cycles, stretching endlessly onward. This sublime doxology, which has no exact parallel in Scripture, bursts forth from the grateful, adoring heart of the apostle, as he surveys the infinite depths and fullness of God's mercy, experienced by him as the chief of sinners, and promised in Jesus Christ to the guiltiest and vilest sinners on earth. The most glorious view of God is that gained by an humbled, penitent soul, looking up to him as he appears in Christ crucified. (Rom. 16:25-27; 1 Tim. 6:16.)

**18-20. SOLEMN CHARGE TO FIDELITY IN THE MINISTRY**—The apostle enjoins Timothy that, incited by the prophecies formerly uttered respecting him, he should accomplish

18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck:

18 This charge I commit unto thee, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies which led the way to thee, that by them thou mayest war the good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience; which some having thrust from them made shipwreck

1 Or, *went before on thee.*

the good warfare by holding faith and a good conscience; since some, having thrust away a good conscience, had made shipwreck in respect of the faith, among whom he instances Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom he had delivered to Satan, that, by their chastisement, they might learn not to blaspheme.

**18. This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy.** The purport of the charge is expressed in the last clause of the verse, in regard to the good warfare. The form of address marks the solemnity and importance of the duty enjoined. **According to the prophecies which went before on thee**—former prophecies, uttered probably in connection with his ordination, which both indicated his divine call as an evangelist and predicted his future eminence in that office. Thus ch. 4: 14: “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee through prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery”; also 2 Tim. 1: 6: “Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands”; where it would appear that Paul, as an apostle, had united with the elders of Lysstra in the ordination of Timothy (Acts 16: 1-3), and that by the laying on of the apostle’s hands a certain spiritual gift had been supernaturally imparted. The prophetic utterances which preceded this may have been made either through Paul himself or through Silas, who was a prophet (Acts 15: 32), or through prophets in that church; and as they were distinct divine assurances of his heavenly call, and of his success in the work assigned him, it was fitting that he should remember these divine predictions, and find in them strength to endure hardness in it. The true minister, in the midst of discouragements, afflictions, and persecutions, finds nothing more inspiring than a vivid remembrance of his divine call to the position and the work in which he is engaged. It gives faith, patience, perseverance, assurance—the qualities by which he triumphs over adversity, and often snatches victory from seeming defeat. Such a prophetic utterance conveyed the divine call to

Barnabas and Saul: “The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.” (Acts 13: 2.) **That thou by (or, in) them mightest war a (the) good warfare.** This is the purport of the charge that, incited by, clad in the armor of, these prophecies, he should war the good warfare. Encouraged by the memory of these divine, prophetic words, he should persevere, amid all obstacles and sufferings, in the great work of the ministry, which had thus been distinctly given him by God. ‘The good warfare’ denotes not a single battle, but the well-known, perpetual conflict, appointed for the Christian and especially for the Christian minister, the whole war, extending to its final issue in complete victory. (2 Tim. 4: 7.)

**19. Holding faith and a good conscience**—that is, by holding faith and a good conscience; indicating the means by which ‘the good warfare’ is to be accomplished. A pure faith and a clear conscience are essential to the maintenance of fidelity in the Christian and ministerial life. **Which (good conscience) some having put away (or, thrust from them).** There is something in the word implying the violence of the act required, and the importance of conscience, reluctant to be so extruded. (Alford.) **Concerning faith have made shipwreck.** The refusal to maintain a good conscience resulted in the loss of the faith, or the true doctrine of the gospel. The yielding to sin dulled the perception of truth, and opened the way for the influx of error. The wreck of faith in the soul is thus directly traced to sin in the life, by which the spiritual perceptions are first made obtuse, and then perverted. The reciprocal relation of conscience and faith is such that the perversion of the one leads, by a natural law, to the perversion of the other. A clear conscience is essential to a pure faith; hence, Christ said: “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.” (John 7: 17.) Heresy has its source, ordinarily, not in the head, but in the heart; an evil conscience, which resists, rather than obeys, the will and word of God.

20 Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

**20. Of whom is Hymenens and Alexander.** Of these names, the former appears in 2 Tim. 2:17, where it probably indicates the person here referred to; the latter is found in 2 Tim. 4:14, with a descriptive addition, "the coppersmith," and also in Acts 19:33, as the name of a prominent Jew at Ephesus. We have no means of knowing which, if either, of these is here designated, for Alexander was a name so common that quite possibly it might designate three different persons among the Christians at Ephesus. **Whom I have delivered unto Satan**—probably, by an act of excommunication, by which they were placed outside of the visible kingdom of God and, so to speak, replaced within the realm of Satan. In the language of Scripture, the devil is called "the god of this world," "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience," and the powers of evil are described as "the rulers of the darkness of this world"; and the soul at conversion is said to be "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his (God's) dear Son." (Eph. 2:2; 6:12; Col. 1:13.) This general representation of Scripture, that outside of the visible kingdom of God on earth is the kingdom of Satan, is here probably the underlying conception. **That they may learn** (Revised Version, *might be taught*) **not to blaspheme.** The word here rendered 'learn,' 'taught,' signifies commonly to be *instructed by discipline or chastisement.* (Luke 23:16; 1 Cor. 11:32; 2 Cor. 6:9.) Discipline, as inflicted in the apostolic churches, was sometimes accompanied by bodily evils and sufferings, at least when administered by apostles; and the act of the church in administering it was thus, by miraculous intervention, attested as having the sanction of God. That such discipline is referred to here may be inferred from the following considerations: 1. Satan is represented as the medium of physical evils. Thus the calamity and bodily sufferings of Job, the "spirit of infirmity" of the woman in the gospel, and the mental and bodily evils of demoniacal possession, are all directly attributed to Satan as the medium; and Paul calls "the thorn in the flesh" "a messenger of Satan." (Job 2:6; Luke 13:16; 2 Cor. 12:7.) 2.

20 concerning the faith: of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I delivered unto Satan, that they might be taught not to blaspheme.

Paul, in the case of the incestuous man, directed the Corinthian Church: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. 5:4, 5.) Intimations of such bodily chastisements for sin are found in 1 Cor. 11:30-32, where, in speaking of their misconduct at the Lord's Supper, the apostle says to the Corinthians: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." It seems probable, therefore, that, accompanying this act of excommunication, there was some form of bodily suffering which was intended to awaken and reclaim the offender. Thus most expositors. Ellicott says: "We conclude then, with Waterland, that delivery over to Satan was a form of Christian excommunication, declaring the person reduced to the state of a heathen, accompanied with the authoritative infliction of bodily disease or death." Alford: "The delivering to Satan, as in 1 Cor. 5:5, seems to have been an apostolic act, for the purpose of active punishment, in order to correction." See also Wordsworth on 1 Cor. 5:5. Barnes: "This was an extraordinary and miraculous power. It was designed for the government of the church in its infancy, when everything was fitted to show the direct agency of God; and it ceased, doubtless, with the apostles. The church now has no such power."

**Ch. 2: In** unfolding the charge committed to Timothy, the apostle gives in this chapter special directions in regard to worship in the public assembly.

**1-7. THE DUTY OF PUBLIC PRAYER FOR ALL MEN, ESPECIALLY FOR RULERS.**—As reasons for this duty he states: 1. The necessity of good government, in order to a quiet and peaceful life; and 2. The excellence and acceptableness of such prayer in the sight of God, inasmuch as he wills the salvation of all men. In proof that God has such good-will toward all, and that public prayer, therefore, should be offered for all, he shows (a) that

## CHAPTER II.

I EXHORT therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2 For kings, and for all that are in authority: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

I exhort therefore, first of all,<sup>1</sup> that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high place; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all

1 Gr. to make supplications, etc.

there is one God for all men; (b) that there is one Mediator between God and all men; (c) that the Mediator gave himself a ransom for all; and (d) that the testimony to this universal provision and offer of salvation in the gospel is the divine message appointed for the Christian ages, for which testimony Paul had been specially appointed an apostle and teacher of the Gentiles.

**1. I exhort, therefore, first of all.** He had charged Timothy (1:18) to war the good warfare in the Christian ministry; and now, passing from that general charge, he gives this specific one in regard to the conduct of worship in the Christian assembly. 'First of all,' therefore, does not mean first in importance, nor first in the order of public worship, but first in the series of directions he is about to give Timothy. **That supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks.** The four terms here used, while doubtless cumulative, serving to emphasize the duty enjoined, also express distinct phases of prayer, and are in some respects distinct in their use. Though each is sometimes used as a general term for prayer, they seem here to describe the several divisions into which public prayer naturally falls. 'Supplications,' derived from a word signifying need, denotes prayer as arising from the feeling of need, and thus embraces all petitions relating to the wants of the suppliants. 'Prayers,' where the act is not petition, but worship, the prompting thought being, not the needs of the suppliant, but the being, attributes, and acts of God, the object of worship; and hence, the word includes adoration, praise, and worship, as inspired by the character and acts of God. 'Intercessions,' prayers offered, not for ourselves, but for others, in which the suppliants, looking out from themselves upon the needs of all classes and conditions of men, make petitions for others in special need, or for the community, the nation and the world. (Rom. 8:34; 11:2; Heb. 7:25.) 'Giving of thanks,' wherein the

worshipers, devoutly recognizing the mercies, temporal and spiritual, received from God by themselves and by all men, offer thanksgiving for the same in the Christian assembly, thus acknowledging and adoring God as, through Christ, the Author and Dispenser of all good. These several sides of public devotion, petition, adoration, intercession, thanksgiving, are here mentioned, not as directing the order in which they should be presented (this, doubtless, should be varied), but as exhibiting the comprehensiveness and the outreaching, universal spiritual sympathy required in public worship. (Eph. 6: 8; Phil. 4: 6.) "Christians," as a priestly race, in behalf, and for the welfare, of all men, shall offer supplication for the common need (*δεσμοίς*), shall adore and invoke God as the common Father of all (*προσευχάς*), shall intercede and give thanks (*έρτενεις* and *έχαπτατις*) for special needs and blessings as they appear among the different classes and circumstances of men, in adversity and prosperity." (Beck.) **Be made for all men**—all men without exception, but here contemplated as existing in different classes and conditions.

**2. For kings and for all that are in authority**—as a distinct and conspicuous class, selected for special emphasis in public prayer. The end or purpose, as also the importance, of prayer for rulers is now indicated. **That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty** (or, *gravity*). That is, that God may so influence the minds of those in authority as to lead to a wise and just government, thus enabling Christians to live in peace, free from turmoil and oppression, and to pursue a life right in the sight of God and honorable in the sight of men. 'Quiet and peaceable'—words essentially synonymous used to emphasize the thought. Honesty, or, *gravity*; the word, though implying honesty, integrity, specially designated that which is decorous, becoming; a conduct which is honorable, respected, and which before men befits the Christian profession. God-

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

3 godliness and gravity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the

liness and gravity thus present the two sides of life, the former the life toward God, the latter the life toward men. Such prayer recognizes the fact that the hearts of rulers are in the hands of God, to guide, influence, and overrule for the best good of his people; and the offering of it in public worship is here strictly enjoined. It is evident, if prayer for rulers was obligatory under the cruel reign of a Nero, the obligation to it must remain to all ages, wholly irrespective of the form of the government and of the character of those in authority; and doubtless, prayer for the government, rather than denunciation of it, is the more effective, as well as the more befitting, service in the Christian assembly. According to Josephus, it was the refusal of the Jews to offer sacrifice in the temple for their heathen rulers, which proved the immediate occasion of the terrific conflict that resulted under Titus in the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Jewish state. ("Bell. Jud." II. 17, 2.) The apostolic churches, on the other hand, always made prayer for rulers prominent in the worship of the Christian assembly; and Justin Martyr, in his "Apology," when vindicating Christians from the charge of fomenting sedition, appeals to this fact and cites this passage in the writings of Paul. ("Apol." 31.)

**3, 4.** The apostle now suggests motives which should lead to prayer for all men, as enjoined, ver. 1. **For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.** Such prayer is in God's sight both morally excellent and well pleasing. God is here called "our Saviour" to intimate at once the claim he has on our regard for what is acceptable to him, and the motive we have to pray for the salvation of others in the fact that he saved us. **Who will have all men to be saved**—or, *since he wills that all men should be saved*. Here (1) is the proof that prayer for all is acceptable with God; it is in harmony with his own benevolent will. His infinite benevolence embraces all men, and would find satisfaction in their salvation. Here also (2) is a motive to prayer for all men. If God benevolently wills that all men should be saved, we ought to be in sympathy with him, and pray for all.

"Imitate God; if he wills that all men should be saved, do thou also will it; but if thou wildest it, pray for it." (Chrysostom.) Note: It is not said that God has decreed to save all men; this would contradict other Scriptures, and would be contrary to fact, since some are plainly not saved. (Matt 25: 41-46; John 5: 28, 29; 2 Thess. 1: 6-9.) But he wills that all men should be saved. It is his will of benevolence; that will, or disposition of his infinite heart of sympathy, which finds perpetual expression, when he "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust"; and which found its noblest expression, when he made his Son "the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world" (Matt. 5: 45; 1 John 2: 2), and thus by an infinite sacrifice provided a salvation adequate for, and freely offered to, all men. This benevolent desire of God for the salvation of all men is often seen in Scripture. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." (Ezek. 33: 11.) "The Lord is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." See 2 Peter 3: 9; compare Hosea 11: 8; Matt. 23: 37. He desires their salvation, however, only in accordance with the principles of his righteous government, and therefore through faith in the redemption he has provided in Christ. "Paul teaches not only here, but in other places (compare Rom. 8: 32; 11: 32; Titus 2: 11), that the desire of God to bless all sinners is unlimited, but it can only be in the ordained way of faith." (Van Oosterzee.) **And to come unto the knowledge of the truth.** The means by which salvation must be appropriated is by coming to the knowledge (*επιγνώσις*, full apprehension, realization, conviction) of the truth; not all truth, but *the* truth, "the truth as it is in Jesus." God wills, therefore, that men be saved by coming to a knowledge of the truth. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3: 16.)

5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;  
6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

5 truth. For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, *himself* man, Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony

**5. For**—the ground of God's benevolent will for the salvation of all men, and of the consequent duty of public prayer for all. **There is one God**—as there is but one God, the Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor of all men, it is evident that he is God, not of a part of men only, but of all men, and in his benevolent will he must desire the salvation of all men. The same argument is used in regard to the universal offer of salvation. See Rom. 3: 29, 30; compare 1 Cor. 8: 4-6; Eph. 4: 6. **And one mediator between God and men**—the fact that one Mediator stands between God and all mankind also shows the impartial regard of God for all men, and the consequent duty of prayer for all. A mediator (*μεσίτης*) is one who stands between parties who are at variance, in order to reconcile them, or who are in nature and dignity so widely separated that they can communicate only through an intermediate person. The word is used of Moses, because he stood between God and Israel, communicating God's will to them, and interceding with God for them. (Exod. 20: 19-22; Deut. 5: 22-31; Gal. 3: 19, 20.) It is elsewhere used of Christ. (Heb. 8: 6; 9: 15; 12: 24.) The idea of mediation, which was central in the Old Testament, pervades the New. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 1: 18; 14: 6.) **The man Christ Jesus.** The article is not in the original. It is not *the* man, nor *a* man, but **MAN**, humanity exalted to true manhood by its union with God in the person of Christ Jesus. The expression emphasizes the nature in which Christ acts as Mediator: it is in **Humanity**, the nature common to all men, and therefore all who bear that nature have a part in his mediation. (Heb. 2: 6-18.) For as the Son of God took on him the nature of man, in order therein to act as Mediator, it follows that he is the Mediator for all who bear that nature. No son of man, however lost and degraded, falls without the scope of Christ's mediation, but has through it the possibility of salvation in the **SON OF MAN**, the one Mediator between God and

**Humanity.** Herein we see the worth and dignity of man, since it is in **Humanity** Christ is performing his mediatorial work, and, by thus exalting our nature, has set before every human being the glorious possibilities of salvation and eternal life.

**6. Who gave himself a ransom for all.** The ransom he paid was paid for all, and if he died for all, his church ought to pray for all. 'Gave himself' points out, not only the voluntariness of his offering, as John 10: 17, 18, but also the completeness of it. He gave, not his life only, but himself, in his whole personality and work, including his humiliation, suffering, and death, as described in Phil. 2: 5-8. "That the main fact alluded to here is the *death* of Christ, we know; but it is not brought into prominence, being included in and superseded by the far greater and more comprehensive fact, that he gave *himself*, in all that he undertook for our redemption." (Alford.) 'A ransom (*ἀντιλαντρόν*) for all.' The simple form (*λαντρόν*) denotes, according to Cremer: 1. "The price paid for the liberation of those in bondage." 2. "The means of expiation with reference to this result." The compound word, used only here in the New Testament, brings forward more distinctly the idea of substitution. Thus Wordsworth: "What does he mean by ransom? Mankind was guilty, and liable to the punishment of death, and he gave himself in their stead (*ἀντὶ*). Ellicott: "In this important word the idea of a substitution of Christ in our stead *cannot* be ignored." Fausset: "Not merely ransom, but a substituted or equivalent ransom, the Greek preposition (*ἀντὶ*) implying reciprocity and vicarious substitution." Thus most interpreters. Compare Matt. 20: 28; Acts 20: 28; 1 Cor. 6: 20; 1 Peter 1: 18, 19. Beck well concludes: "So far, therefore, as Christ's work was accomplished in his self-offering, as the holy and righteous one, he was himself the price paid, the *λαντρόν*; and so far as he by that self-offering entered truly into the place of all men, even into the death penalty attaching to human sin, in order to bring men exactly and truly into his own place in relation to God—thereby is he *ἀντιλαντρόν*." **To**

7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not,) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

7 to be borne in its own times; whereunto I was appointed a 'preacher and an apostle (I speak the truth, I lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

8 I desire therefore that the men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and

1 Gr. *herald.*

**be testified in due time**, or, *the testimony* (appointed) *for its own times*. This is in opposition to the whole preceding statement in the verse. That God is the God of all men, Gentiles as well as Jews, and that Christ is the one Mediator between God and all mankind, having offered himself a ransom for all—is the testimony to be borne in the Christian ages. This forms the grand message of the Christian ministry; they are to proclaim the fullness and freeness of salvation in the gospel, as sufficient for, and offered to, all men, of every race and clime and tongue under heaven. This universality, alike in the provision and in the offer of salvation in Christ, is "the mystery which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit, that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." (Eph. 3:3-9.)

**7. Whereunto I am ordained**, etc. *Unto which (testimony) I was appointed a herald and an apostle.* For the proclamation and establishment of this great truth—THE GOSPEL FOR ALL MEN—Paul was specially called and sent forth; and in testifying to that momentous fact, he is first a herald, or proclaimier, and secondly, an apostle, one personally selected by Christ as an authorized representative of him and an inspired expounder of his gospel. **I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not.** The best manuscripts, except the Sinaitic, omit "in Christ" here. This protestation of truthfulness was not needed to assure Timothy, but was important in accrediting him to others as an assistant of a genuine apostle, especially in view of the opposition to Paul's apostolic character and authority, often evoked by his assertion of the universality of the offer of salvation. Compare Rom. 9:1; 2 Cor. 11:31. **A teacher of the Gentiles**—a further emphasis of the distinctive position God had given him as the apostle to the Gentiles and of the consequent univers-

sality of the gospel; from which necessarily follows the duty of prayer for all men, the main subject of the passage. **In faith and verity**—showing the sphere or element in which he exercised the office of teacher of the Gentiles; it was in the faith on Christ and in the truth of the gospel. This was the substance, as well as the subject, of his teaching.

**8-15. POSITION AND DUTIES OF THE SEXES IN THE WORSHIP OF THE PUBLIC ASSEMBLY.**

—1. *Of the men.* On them is devolved the service of prayer, respecting which it is required that it be performed (1) only by men of blameless lives and (2) without anger and disputation. (8.) 2. *Of the women.* (1) They are to observe modesty in apparel and propriety in deportment, being distinguished for good works rather than for costly array. (2) They are to keep silence, inasmuch as the office of teaching in the public assembly of the church is not permitted them. (9-15.) This restriction of the ministerial office to men is explained: such a function would be inconsistent with that subordination of the woman to the man which is involved (a) in the creation of the woman subsequent to, and as a helpmeet for, the man, and (b) in the precedence of the woman in the fall, and the greater relative weakness of nature therein shown. But woman, though thus denied a public, official, position as teacher of the church, is not denied salvation, but shall attain it, not in the exercise of public functions, but while filling her normal position in the family and home life.

8. **I will therefore**—the language of authority, not merely of wish; it was his will as an apostle. As he resumes here the subject introduced (ver. 1-3), but interrupted by a digression (ver. 4-7), the word *therefore* is added to mark the resumption. **That (the) men pray every where.** 'Men' in the Greek has the article, *the men* to emphasize the restriction of prayer in the public assembly to men. Probably at Ephesus, as elsewhere, in the absence of church edifices, the church had different places of meeting; but 'every where,'

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

9 <sup>1</sup>disputing. In like manner that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; but (which becometh women pro-

<sup>1</sup> Or, *doubting*.

or, *in every place* in which it assembled for worship, prayer was to form a part of the service, and the offering of it was a function devolved on the men. **Lifting up holy hands**—at once intimating a common bodily attitude in prayer, uplifted hands, and defining the character required in those who officiated in it. (2 Chron. 6:12; Ps. 28:2; 63:5; 134:2; 141:2.) They must be men whose hands are unstained with wrong. This is a frequent figure for uprightness, purity of life. (Job 17:9; Ps. 24:4; James 4:8.) The Hebrews washed their hands before offering worship. (Ps. 26:6.) The church is “a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God by Jesus Christ”; and no man may venture to exercise this priestly function, in offering before God the worship of the Christian assembly, unless his character and life befit the profession of godliness. Clemens Romanus, the contemporary of Paul, wrote to the Corinthian Church: “Let us come to him in holiness of soul, lifting up to him pure and undefiled hands.” (Epistle 1:29.) **Without wrath and doubting** (or, *disputation*). ‘Wrath’ expresses the inward passion, ‘disputation’ the outward manifestation of it in angry discussion. The worship of the church is not to be offered amidst angry wranglings, which presuppose a state of mind unsuited to such a service, and can only bring discredit on it. (Matt. 5:21-24; 6:14, 15; 1 Peter 3:7.) Thus substantially Bloomfield, Huther, Van Oosterzee, Wiesinger, and Wordsworth. Ellicott, however, prefers the rendering of our version, “doubting” to “disputation,” with whom Alford, Fairbairn, and Beek concur. Compare in this sense, Mark 6:24; James 1:6, 7.

**9. In like manner also**—as he had before declared his apostolic will respecting the position and function of men in public worship, he now ‘in like manner’ points out the proper sphere and deportment of women in it. In the case of both, the directions relate to the public assembly of the church. **That women adorn themselves in modest apparel**,

**with shamefacedness and sobriety**—their apparel is to be neither gaudy nor slovenly, but well ordered, decorous, such as befits the womanly and Christian character; and their deportment is to be marked by modesty and discretion. Wordsworth has well defined ‘shamefacedness’ (or, *shamefastness*, as in Revised Version), as that “inner grace of reverence . . . especially self-reverence, which shrinks from anything unseemly and impure,” and ‘sobriety’ as “that soundness of mind, which regulates and controls all inordinate desires, and exercises a dignified self-restraint on the actions and deportment.” This last word is explained by Ellicott: “sobermindedness,” or “the well-balanced state of mind, arising from an habitual self-restraint.” **Not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array**—‘braided hair,’ or *plaitings*, referring probably, not to the mere braiding or plaiting of the hair, but to the custom then prevalent in fashionable life, of interweaving in the hair gold, silver, pearls, causing it to flash brilliantly in the light. ‘Gold’: the chains, rings, bracelets, and anklets, with which the female was often laden. Compare Isa. 3:16-24, for a graphic description of female extravagance in ornament, and the prophet’s denunciation of it. Here, as in 1 Peter 3:3-5, all outward ornaments are not forbidden, but only that excess in their use which marks a frivolous mind anxious for display. Their outward adorning is not to be their distinguishing mark.

**10. But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works**—they shall adorn themselves, not in costly array, but by means of good works. Their chief distinction, as they appear in the church of God, shall be one of character, derived from deeds of charity and self-denying labors in the work of religion. Such adorning alone ‘becometh,’ or *befits* them as ‘professing godliness,’ or piety toward God, who regards, not the outward appearance, but the inward character and the actual life. ‘Godliness’ (*θεοσεβεία*, a word not

11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.  
 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.  
 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.  
 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

fessing godliness) through good works. Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath

elsewhere used in the New Testament): it denotes reverence toward God, an attitude of mind which should lead to modesty in apparel when appearing before him. "Their life, not dead articles of apparel, shall be their adorning; and this living adorning comes only through the practice of good works." (Beck.) The connection is rightly given by Calvin: "If piety must be attested in works, then the profession of it ought to appear in the chasteness of the apparel."

**11. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.** The position of woman in the public worship of the church is here defined. It is that of a silent learner, in manner and in act yielding subjection in all lawful respects to the authority that God has given to man as leader of worship in the assembly of the church. This is laid down as a rule universal in the churches. (1 Cor. 14:34, 35.) The gospel had elevated the position of woman, and given her a share in the ordinances and a place in the assembled church. The great truth, so new to the ancient world, that in the kingdom of God "there is neither male nor female . . . but all are one in Christ Jesus," had lifted the sex to a higher plane; and it might well occur that, in using the liberty thus conferred, some, especially in a city like Ephesus, would seek to exercise functions inconsistent with the original and unchangeable position of subordination that God had appointed for the sex.

**12. But I suffer not a woman to teach** —that is, to exercise the office of teacher, or preacher, in the church. The whole passage relates to the public worship of the church; the context, therefore, plainly limits the word 'teach,' as used here, to teaching, or preaching, in the public assembly. **Nor to usurp authority over the man.** A reason for the preceding prohibition. The position of teacher, or preacher, in the public congregation in itself implies superiority or authority over those who are taught; and the functions of this office are, therefore, forbidden to woman, as inconsistent with the subordinate position

that God assigned her. The apostle thus teaches that the repulsion which is felt in a well-constituted mind at the appearance of woman in such a position is not the result of mere education or prejudice, but is natural, springing from an instinctive sense of its impropriety as a violation of natural order. **But to be in silence.** Referring still solely to her position and duty in the public assembly of the church.

**13, 14. For Adam was first formed, then Eve** —a proof of the subordination of woman to man as seen in the order of their creation; the man was first created, and only afterward, and as supplementary, the woman. "First, so that the woman was created for him." (Bengel.) The sense is more fully expressed (1 Cor. 11:7-9), "For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man." **And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression.** A second proof of woman's subordination, as also a reason for her subjection, is that, in the temptation, her greater weakness was manifest, in that, while Adam was not deceived, she was completely deceived by the tempter. The serpent, recognizing the greater weakness of her nature, assailed her and not the man (Gen. 3:1); and she, being fully deceived, has come into transgression. She was thus first in the transgression, and that through a pliancy of nature which, it is implied, the serpent did not expect in the man, and would not have found in him. The man, on the other hand, was not thus deceived, but only yielded to sin when the tempter, through the woman's fall, had gained the higher vantage ground of approaching him through her persuasions, and of influencing him through the love he bore her. (Gen. 3:12, 17.) The man and the woman both sinned; but the woman was the more susceptible to deception, yielding to a temptation lower in form and less in power. Eve, the first woman, is here regarded as representative of her sex, showing in her weakness the relative inferiority of

woman in that form of intellectual and moral strength required for leadership and the exercise of authority; but it is obvious that this is not inconsistent, either with her superiority to man in those qualities which specially distinguish her within her true sphere, or with the many and marked exceptions in which the female nature has proved itself superior, alike in penetration to detect and expose deception, and in power to resist and overcome temptation. There is here, also, perhaps a reminiscence of the sentence pronounced on the woman (*Gen. 3: 16*): "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Compare 1 Cor. 11: 3-15; Eph. 5: 22-24.

The passage plainly denies to woman the office of the ministry, or the function of prayer and instruction in the public assemblies of the church, on the ground that such an office, as it involves authority over the man, is inconsistent with the divinely-constituted nature and position of woman as subordinate to man. The proofs of this subordination are two: 1. It is indicated by the order of their creation,—"Adam was first formed, then Eve,"—where, however, the proofs of woman's inferior position is not found merely in her later creation, but rather in the cause of it; namely, that her creation was in order to supply a need of the man, and that, in effecting it, she was taken out of him. (*Gen. 2: 18-24*; 1 Cor. 11: 7-9.) She was, therefore, only a complement of the man; a subsequent, and not a primary, figure in the transaction. 2. The subordination of woman, in nature and position, further appears in the fall, in that the serpent, recognizing her relative weakness, assailed, not the man, but the woman; and in that, completely deceived, she yielded, and thus came first into transgression. These reasons, founded on the original constitution and nature of the woman, are plainly valid in all places and in all ages; and the rule excluding woman from the office of the ministry in the church, of which they form the ground, is consequently universal and perpetual. Resting on the primal relation God established between the sexes, it is unrestricted by time and place, and remains in force for all the ages. This rule, however, requiring the silence of women in the public worship of God, can only by a most arbitrary interpretation be applied to her in the informal, social meeting. Plainly it is only in the official

position of the public teacher of the church she would 'usurp authority over the man'; and the inhibition, therefore, has its natural limitation to the functions of the ministerial office. In spirit, indeed, it would forbid to woman, in any mixed assembly, an arrogant, declamatory, or didactic mode of address, as unsuited to her nature and relations; but nothing in the language or connection here can properly be construed as forbidding her, in the informal social gatherings of Christians, the utterance of her heart experiences in the communion of saints, and the outbreathing of her spiritual desires in communion with God, provided it be done in a manner befitting the modesty and gentleness of her sex. Indeed, many examples show that public prayer and address were not forbidden to woman on all occasions, as that of Anna in the temple (*Luke 2: 38*), and that of Mary and the women assembled with the one hundred and twenty. (*Acts 1: 14*.) The apostle elsewhere refers, without rebuke, to women praying and prophesying in the church, and prescribes the manner in which they should do this. (1 Cor. 11: 3-16.) [May not the apostle refer, in 1 Cor. 11: 3-16, to small, social meetings of Christians wherein thought and feeling were expressed in a conversational manner? This interpretation was accepted by Meyer in the last edition of his commentary, and it brings the passage into harmony with his direction in 1 Cor. 14: 34-36. That Christians often met in small groups in private houses is evident from several passages of the New Testament, and it certainly is possible that Paul had in mind such meetings.—A. H.] The plain import of the passage here is, therefore, woman, being subordinate to man, should fill no office and exercise no function in the church involving authority over man; but neither the language here, nor the analogy of other Scripture, allows an interpretation forbidding her participation in public exercises consistent with the subordinate position of her sex, although without doubt her chief sphere, as here indicated, is the home life.

**15. Notwithstanding**—that is, that she came thus into transgression—**she shall be saved in (or, through) childbearing**—that is, the 'childbearing' decreed in God's sentence on her, "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children" (*Gen. 3: 16*), which, as the special

15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

15 fallen into transgression; but she shall be saved through her childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.

### CHAPTER III.

THIS is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

1 2 Faithful is the saying, If a man seeketh the office

1 Or, the childbearing.....2 Some connect the words *Faithful is the saying* with the preceding paragraph.

sorrow of her appointed lot, is selected here as characterizing her whole sphere in life; namely, the home, in its privacy and sanctity, rather than the public assembly, in its utterances of worship and instruction. ‘Notwithstanding’ her sin, she shall find salvation; yet not through using the functions and usurping the authority of man, but through abiding in the sphere and performing the functions God has appointed her. “A holy married life, with the bearing and training of children, is, as a rule, the appointed path for women; and it will end in their salvation in spite of their original weakness, if that path be humbly and faithfully pursued.” (Conybeare.) “Childbearing evidently denotes the sphere which properly belongs to the woman, and thus stands in opposition to the sphere of public teaching, which she enters only by usurpation.” (Wiesinger.) Thus Bengel, De Wette, Huther, Beck, and most expositors. Wordsworth, however, interprets: “Saved through the childbearing—that is, through the blessed childbearing of the promised SEED OF THE WOMAN, the second Adam, Jesus Christ.” With this concur, for substance, Doddridge, Macknight, Ellicott, and Fairbairn. **If they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.** Lest they might conceive of the peculiar functions of their life as the means of their obtaining salvation, rather than as the sphere in which it is to be attained, the apostle here states the means on which their salvation is conditioned: they must first possess, and then continue in, faith and love and holiness, with self-restraint, or sober-mindedness.

Note: The apostle here, as elsewhere, assumes that the Mosaic account of the creation and fall is, not only in substance, but in detail, historically true. He has here distinctly based on the statements recorded in Genesis his argument respecting the relative position of the sexes in the church through all ages. Indeed, the entire Pentateuch, in all its essential facts

and in the forms of expression it employs, is uniformly treated by Christ and his apostles as authentic and historic, a course absolutely inconceivable, if it were either mythical or allegorical in character, or a post-exilian composition falsely ascribed to Moses. See Matt. 22: 31, 32; Mark 10: 3; John 3: 14; 7: 19; 8: 58; Rom. 4: 3; 10: 5; 1 Cor. 10: 2; 2 Cor. 3: 7; Gal. 3: 8.

**Ch. 3: 1-7. QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED IN A PASTOR.**—He who aspires to this office is desiring an honorable work; in him, therefore, the following qualifications are required:

1. An irreproachable Christian character, unblemished by vices and adorned by the Christian virtues. (2, 3.) 2. A wise and firm guidance and rule in his own family, as the pledge of his ability to preside over the church. (4, 5.) 3. A maturity of Christian experience and character, sufficient to insure that his elevation to the office will not serve to inflate his pride and thus work his injury. (6.) 4. A good reputation outside of the church, so that, resting under no reproach, his influence in the office may not be impaired, and he may not thereby fall into the snare of the devil. (7.)

**1. This is a true saying** (or, *faithful is the saying*)—an expression found chiefly in the Pastoral Epistles, designed to emphasize the following statement as important and worthy of confidence. **If a man desire, or, seek**—literally, *stretches himself out after*; that is, *aspires to*, the aspiration here being not necessarily other than an honorable one. Compare Heb. 11: 16. The word may denote that longing desire for the work of preaching the gospel which is the primary evidence of a divine call to it, and without which there is no real fitness for it. It is probable that in the Ephesian Church there were those who thus aspired to the pastoral office. **The office of a bishop**—in the Greek, only a single word (*επισκοπή*); literally, *oversight*. It denotes in

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

2 of a <sup>1</sup>bishop, he desireth a good work. The <sup>1</sup>bishop therefore must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to

1 Or overseer.

Scripture: 1. *The act of visitation*, as when God visits men, either for blessing, as "the time of thy visitation" (Luke 19: 44), or for judgment. (Isa. 10: 3.) 2. The office of an overseer (*ἐπίσκοπος*). Here, as the context shows, it is used in the latter sense, and characterizes the office by its chief work, the oversight or care of the church. The word *pastor*, as at present used, is the equivalent of "bishop" (*ἐπίσκοπος*), as used in the New Testament. **He desireth a good work**—not merely a good position or dignity, but a good *work*; an occupation which is morally excellent, alike in its object and in its exercise, a vocation worthy of one's aspiration, in the beneficence and grandeur of its purpose and in the purity and excellence of its nature.

The word here translated "bishop" (*ἐπίσκοπος*) was "the name given in Athens to the men sent into subdued States to conduct their affairs." (Cremer.) In the New Testament it is used as follows: The verb (*ἐπίσκοπεῖν*) from which it is derived is found twice—Heb. 12: 15: "Looking diligently, lest any man fail of the grace of God," and 1 Peter 5: 2: "Feed the flock of God, which is among you, *taking the oversight* thereof, not by constraint, but willingly." In the second instance it refers to the pastor's office. The noun (*ἐπίσκοπος*) is found five times, in four of which it designates a pastor, or overseer, of a church (Acts 20: 28; Phil. 1: 1; 1 Tim. 3: 2; Titus 1: 7), and in one Christ as the Pastor, or Overseer, of the whole church. (1 Peter 2: 25.) The terms *bishop* and *elder* in the New Testament are plainly used as designations of the same officer; the distinction between them, elevating the *bishop* in rank above the *elder*, is post-apostolic and wholly unknown in Scripture. The evidence of this is as follows: 1. These terms are repeatedly used as interchangeable, as Acts 20: 15, 28; Titus 1: 5-7; 1 Peter 1: 2. 2. The qualifications and duties required of them are identical, as 1 Tim. 3: 1-7; Titus 1: 5-9. 3. Ordination, which has been claimed as a special prerogative of *bishops*, in the later sense of the word, was plainly conferred by the *eldership*, or *presbytery*, 1 Tim. 4: 14. 4. *Elder*, derived

from Jewish usage, emphasizes the dignity of the office, while *bishop*, taken from the Greek, points out its peculiar work as one of oversight; both terms were, therefore, naturally in common use, as designating different aspects of the one office. Jerome says: "A presbyter, therefore, is the same as a *bishop*, and before these were, by the devil's instigation, parties in religion, and it was said among the people: 'I am of Paul,' and 'I of Apollos,' and 'I of Cephas'; the churches were governed by the common council of the presbyters." ("Com. on Titus.") This view of the identity of the *bishop* and *presbyter*, or *elder*, in the New Testament, has now the sanction of nearly all scholars, English and German, Episcopal and non-Episcopal, and ought to be regarded as settled.

**2. A bishop then.** Such being the exalted nature of a pastor's office and work, he proceeds to show, as an inference therefrom, the qualifications necessary for it. **Must be blameless**—literally, one who in wrestling gives his adversary no hold on him; hence, one who gives no occasion of reproach, irreproachable in character and conduct. **The husband of one wife**—not that he *must* be a married man, although the passage, contrary to the Romish dogma of the celibacy of the clergy, clearly implies that a pastor in the apostolic churches was usually a married man, and perhaps, as Huther suggests, "there is at bottom a pre-supposition that it is better for a *bishop* to be married than to be unmarried." But the requirement is that, if married, he must have but one wife. The question then occurs, whether this forbids, in the candidate for the pastoral office, that he have more than one wife at the same time, or that he remarry after his first wife's death. Is it polygamy or is it remarriage that is here prohibited?

The latter view, that it forbids remarriage, was, in accordance with the prevailing ascetic tendency, very early taken by some in the patristic churches. It has always prevailed in the Greek and the Oriental Churches, and is defended by many eminent Protestants, as Bloomfield, Wiesinger, Van Oosterzee, Hu-

ther, Alford, Ellicott, Wordsworth, and Fausset. The grounds of this view may be briefly summarized as follows: 1. That no evidence exists of polygamy in the apostolic churches; there was, therefore, no need of its prohibition in the ministry. 2. That a general sentiment then prevailed against second marriages, especially by persons engaged in a sacred work, as is plain from the prohibition of it in the Pagan priesthood, and from the frequent condemnation of it in the patristic literature. Abstinence from it in the Christian ministry would, therefore, be naturally required as a matter of expediency, that the common sentiment of society might not be offended. 3. It is generally added, however, that the rule, as it was thus based, not on an immutable moral principle, but on temporary expediency, is not now imperative, in the changed condition of modern public sentiment. The other interpretation, however, making it forbid polygamy, or the having of more than one living wife, is by far the more natural, alike from the language and the circumstances. It was held among the Fathers by Chrysostom, Theodoret, Jerome, Oecumenius, and Theophylact, and among Protestants has been advocated by Calvin, Henry, Scott, Barnes, Fairbairn, and Beck. It rests on the following considerations: 1. According to Rom. 7:2-4, death absolutely sunders the marriage bond, leaving the survivor wholly free, as if never before married, to enter into a new marriage relation. Consequently the man who marries again, after being bereft by death of his former wife, is, in the Pauline conception, still only "the husband of one wife." The apostle could never conceive of such person as having more than one wife; and he can, therefore, by no just construction of language, be conceived here as regarding a remarriage as disqualifying for the pastorate. 2. Remarriage, after the death of the wife, cannot be in itself wrong, since the apostle expressly sanctions the remarriage of widows (1 Cor. 7:8, 9, 39), and, in the case of the younger widows, directly enjoins it. (5:14.) Now, as there is no principle which would distinguish, in this respect, the case of the woman from that of the man, the same rule must apply to both. This argument is strengthened, also, when the apostle's emphasis on the universal right of marriage is

considered. "Marriage is honourable in *all*." (Heb. 13:4.) 3. Polygamy was at that time not uncommon, both among Jews and Gentiles, especially in the East; and, sanctioned by extorted examples in the Old Testament, there was danger that it might find a permanent place in the Christian Church. "Even in the time of Justin we find the Rabbins practicing polygamy" ("Dial. cum Tryph." page 226, ed. Pan); "the Emperor Theodosius enacted a special law, anno 393, forbidding polygamy to the Jews" (Tholuck, on Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5:31).

But, as it was the purpose of the gospel to elevate the female sex and restore the marriage relation to its original condition (Mat. 19:3-12), as the union of one man to one woman, it was in the highest degree probable that polygamy would be forbidden in a church officer. For if, as is altogether probable, some such polygamous families had been converted, and the difficulties and hardships attending their separation had led to their temporary tolerance in the church, still it might be expected that men in such polygamous relations, though tolerated in private station, would be excluded from those public, official positions, in which Christianity was expected to be more conspicuously exemplified. Besides, the lax laws of divorce, and the still more lax usages of society in regard to divorce then prevalent among both Jews and Gentiles, made it a not unusual fact that a married man had several former wives still living, who, having been divorced on some other than the one Scriptural ground, were in the sight of God still his wives. Now such a man, when converted, might find it impossible to rectify the false marital relations thus formed, and might, nevertheless, be allowed a place in the church; but it is plain that he could not be put in the conspicuous and responsible position of a pastor. [If we bear in mind the following facts: (1) that no cases of actual polygamy in the early churches are reported—that is, no instances of men living with two or more women as their wives at the same time; (2) that the practice of divorce for *unscriptural reasons* was alarmingly frequent—more frequent, indeed, than at almost any other period in history; (3) that the apostle gives the same rule in the same form of expression respecting a widow (5:9), who can-

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;  
4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

3 hospitality, apt to teach; 4 no brawler, no striker but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children

1 Or, *not quarrelsome over wine.*

not be supposed to have lived with more than one husband at the same time, or to have been rejected by Paul for marrying again after the death of her husband, but who may, by improper divorce, have had more than one husband—it appears safe to assume that the apostle had in view those, and those only, who might properly be regarded by Christians as having more than one wife, because they had effected divorce for insufficient reasons, and had taken a second wife. See a fuller examination of these passages in the editor's "Scriptural Law of Divorce," pp. 61-70.—A. H.]

4. There is no adequate evidence that remarriage was forbidden to the Pagan priesthood, nor that a common sentiment existed against it, either in the Greek or Roman population in the apostolic age. The popular sentiment which prevailed against it at a later period was based on the false asceticism which afterward arose as Christianity became corrupted. It seems clear, therefore, that the disqualification here intended is not remarriage after the death of a wife, but polygamy, or the having at the same time more than one living wife.

**Vigilant.** The word denotes one who is abstinent, especially as regards the use of wine or strong drink, but, in a derived sense, one who is watchful over all his appetites and passions, to hold them in due restraint. **Sober** (*σωφρων*)—of *sound mind*; one who has at once sound sense and sound morals, in whom the moral understanding dominates the lower nature, and the man is hence sound minded, self-restrained, discreet. **Of good behaviour** (*κόσμως*)—referring to the outward deportment; orderly, decorous, a kind, courteous man, a Christian gentleman. The word denotes that which is *well ordered*, and thus, in some connections, *modest*, as ch. 2: 9.<sup>1</sup>

**Given to hospitality**—hospitable, ready to entertain strangers: a duty specially important in the social conditions of ancient times, when Christians could not find entertainment at the public inns without danger, either of insult or of complicity with idolatry. (Rom. 12:

13; Titus 1: 10; Heb. 13: 2; 1 Peter 4: 9.) **Apt to teach**—including both the disposition or the love for teaching, and the ability or skill for it. The minister, then, must neither be ignorant nor undisciplined; for how can one be "apt to teach" whose mind is unstored with knowledge and untrained to impart it? (2 Tim. 2: 24-26.)

**3. Not given to wine**—literally, *not with wine*. The word, by usage, marks the person, not only as addicted to wine, but also as in the condition of character and life resulting from such a habit, "including drunkenness and its manifestation"; hence, a *brawler*, or violent, disorderly person. **No striker**—not a man of violent, combative disposition, perhaps including here the bodily manifestation of it. He must be one who has his temper under control, not moved by passion, but ready to "show all meekness to all men." **Not greedy of filthy lucre.** This is not found in the older manuscripts, but is probably interpolated from Titus 1: 7, where it properly belongs. Thus nearly all, except Beck. **But patient, not a brawler.** *Forbearing and uncontentious*, the two attributes standing in contrast with the disposition of the "striker." The pastor is not to be a hasty, passionate, violent man, but to possess a spirit of gentleness, averse to dispute and quarrel. (2 Tim. 2: 24) **Not covetous**—free from avarice, or greed of worldly gain, with perhaps a retrospective reference to the requirement, "given to hospitality." "Covetousness is bad in any, but worst in a minister whose calling leads him to converse so much with another world." (Henry.)

**4. One that ruleth well his own house**—or, presides well over his own household. **Having his children in subjection.** His character and government at home must be such as to secure a well-ordered household, in which the children are in habitual subjection. The duty and importance of a wise and firm family government are constantly taught in Scripture (Gen. 18: 19; Ps. 101: 2; Prov. 22: 6; Eph. 5: 4), and the sad results of failure in this find illus-

<sup>1</sup> "What *σωφρων* is within, that *κόσμως* is without." (Dengel.)

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

5 in subjection with all gravity; (but if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he 6 take care of the church of God?) not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the <sup>1</sup>condemnation of 7 the devil. Moreover he must have good testimony from them that are without; lest be fall into

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *judgment.*

tration in the case of Eli. (1 Sam. 3:11-14) **With all gravity.** Referred by Van Oosterzee, Beck, Hofmann, and others to the father, as marking the dignity of manner befitting him in the family; but it seems more naturally here to characterize the bearing and deportment of the children, "with reverent modesty," as it is understood by most. Compare Titus 1:6.

**5. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?** An argument parenthetically interposed. A pastor is to preside over the church, as a father presides over his household; the success of the candidate in the narrower sphere of his own home, is, therefore, a proper test of his adaptation to success in the wider sphere of the church. If he has failed in the less charge, he is clearly unfit for the greater. Here, as everywhere in the New Testament, in describing the work of a pastor, emphasis is placed, not merely on the preaching function, but also on the presiding, governing function. (Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:14.)

**6. Not a novice**—literally, *one newly planted*, a neophyte, a recent convert. **Lest, being lifted up with pride** (or, *self-conceit*)—literally, *lest being filled, or enveloped, with smoke*; that is, his self-conceit, like smoke, darkening his vision, so that he does not see clearly his own weakness and danger, and thus stumbles into some trap set for him by the adversary. “*Wrapt in smoke*, so that, inflated with self-conceit and exaggerated ideas of his own importance, he cannot see himself and others in the true light.” (Fausset.) (1 Tim. 6:4; 2 Tim. 3:4.) **He fall into the condemnation of the devil**—that is, the condemnation into which the devil fell. Throughout Scripture, as in 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6, the full and condemnation of angels appear as originating in a pride which led to self-will and rebellion; and the new convert, suddenly elevated to a post of distinction in the church, was in danger thereby of a self-conceit that might lead to his destruction. For “pride goeth before destruc-

tion, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” (Prov. 16:18.) “We should take heed of pride, because it is a sin that turned angels into devils.” (Henry.) Doubtless, there is so wide a difference in the age, character, and tendencies of recent converts, that no fixed rule is possible, as to the length of time which should elapse before any one can properly be admitted to the ministry; but the most imperative considerations demand that careful heed be given to this prohibition, for the welfare, alike of the convert himself, and of the Church of God. The wrecks of many a Christian character, thus destroyed, lie all along the course of Christian history, and emphasize the warning “*Lay hands hastily on no man.*” (5:22.)

**7. Moreover, he must have a good report of them that are without**—that is, of those who are not members of the church. In the selection of a pastor, regard must be had to the reputation he has in the general community, as to his truthfulness, integrity, and purity of life. His character and life among men must be such as to inspire confidence, so that, in discharging the duties of his office, he may command himself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. (2 Cor. 4:2.) This care in reference to the general reputation of church officers is elsewhere enjoined and exemplified. (Acts 6:3; 16:2; 2 Cor. 6:3, 4; 1 Th. 5:12.) **Lest he fall into reproach.** The reproach resulting from his previous ill-repute, which would be intensified by his elevation to the conspicuous position of a pastor. Or the reference may be to the reproach occasioned by a possible relapse into those evil courses, which had already alienated from him the confidence of the people. **And the snare of the devil.** The minister’s own moral power is weakened if he is conscious that his course of life has been such as to alienate from him the confidence of the community; such an one, therefore, should not be set apart to the office, because he would be thereby more exposed to fall, by the temptation either to seek the popular favor by false methods, or to defy public opinion by a bold

continuance in evil courses. It is evident, also, that no man whose character is under reproach, or even serious suspicion, can ever accomplish in a community the true work of a Christian pastor, however brilliant may be his talents, or attractive his social qualities.

The qualifications here required in the pastor belong, as in the related passages, 2 Tim. 2: 15-26; Titus 1: 5-9, rather to the realm of the common, homely virtues than to that of intellect and learning. These grand moral characteristics, as forming the foundation of ministerial character and usefulness, must distinguish the ministry in all ages and all lands; and, while the intellectual gifts and culture of the pulpit will differ in different individuals and at different times, the presence of the moral qualities here specified is always and everywhere an essential condition of admission to the office. It is the duty, therefore, of a church before electing a pastor, and of a presbytery before ordaining him, to ascertain whether these qualifications are found in the candidate. His moral dispositions; his self-government; his spirit and life at home and abroad; the reputation he has, as a man and a Christian, outside of the church—all these are points of chief moment in the qualifications of a pastor. The primal question to be asked, therefore, is not "Is he talented?" Is he learned? Is he eloquent? Is he social?" but far more, "Is he thoroughly Christian in character, and godly in life?" For in the pastoral office, while gifts are important, grace is essential. Moral and spiritual qualifications, however, though fundamental, are not the only conditions of admission to the pastoral office, for the apostle requires also that a man be "apt to teach." Elsewhere, also, he gives charge that God's word be committed only to "faithful men, who shall be *able to teach others also*," "*in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*," "*able by sound doctrine to exhort and convince the gainsayers*"; and that the minister show himself "*approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*" (2 Tim. 2: 2, 15, 25; Titus 1: 9.) The pastor's work is to unfold and enforce truth in the pulpit, as well as to illustrate it in holy living. Piety, therefore, essential as it is, if not accompanied with mental gifts and discipline, is not evidence of a ministerial call.

**8-13. QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED IN DEACONS.**—They must be: 1. Men of dignified deportment, truthful, temperate and liberal. (8.) 2. Men who hold the gospel in a pure conscience. (9.) 3. Men who have been tested and have shown themselves qualified, in character and ability, for the office. The deaconesses, who were probably often chosen from the wives of the deacons, the apostle adds, must possess the same moral qualifications, in general, as the deacons. (10, 11.) 4. Deacons are to be men who have only one living wife, and who preside well over their own households (12). Finally, the value and importance of the deacon's office is seen in the richness of its reward, which is found in the higher advancement in grace and the greater confidence in faith which its right use secures. (13.)

The Greek term for deacon (*διάκονος*) signifies, in general, one who serves, a servant in any capacity; but its special application in the New Testament is to the second class of church officers. Of these the earliest record is found in the appointment of "the seven." (Acts 6:1-6.) For the work to which the "seven" were set apart—namely, "to serve tables," or supervise the temporal welfare of the Church—is one of universal and permanent necessity, and is designated by the corresponding verb (*διακονεῖν*), the appropriate word for the work of the deacon's office; while it is also placed in contrast to the work of the ministry, "prayer and the ministry of the word," as being a distinct function. The general sense of Christendom has, therefore, interpreted this as the institution of the diaconate, and the subsequent references to the office in the New Testament confirm this view. The following facts appear in Scripture: 1. It is a permanent office in the church; for not only is the permanent need of such officers evident, but deacons are mentioned with bishops as the ordinary officers, and their qualifications alone, besides those of bishops, are specifically prescribed. See Phil. 1: 1; 1 Tim. 3: 8-13. Compare, also, Rom. 12: 7; 1 Peter 4: 11. 2. They are chosen by the whole congregation of disciples, and are ordained by the ministry. (Acts 6:5, 6.) The term of service, whether long or short, is not prescribed, and is doubtless to be decided by each church for itself. 3. The duty of the deacons is to administer the temporal affairs of

8 Likewise *must* the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless.

8 reproach and the snare of the devil. Deacons in like manner *must* be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them

the church, such as the relief of the poor, the support of public worship, the care of the church property, and the provision for the due administration of the ordinances. This is evident from their original appointment. They were "to serve tables," that is, attend to arrangements for the sustenance of the poor and of the ministry, this being done from a common fund; and their work is thus placed in direct contrast with that of "the twelve," which was "prayer and the ministry of the word." While, therefore, the elders supervise the spiritual welfare of the church, the deacons have the supervision of its temporal interests. In the Episcopal organization of the church, the deacons form the third order of spiritual officers, and are empowered to preach and baptize. They are not "lay," but "clerical" officers. As opposed to this, however, it is significant that, among the qualifications here required for the diaconate, Paul omits, *apt to teach*, and emphasizes those qualities which give special fitness for secular duties, thus, as in its original appointment, broadly distinguishing the office from that of the preacher. It is true that Philip, one of "the seven," preached and baptized; but this occurred some time after his choice to the diaconate, and when he had become an evangelist. (Acts 8: 26-40; 21: 8.)

**8. Likewise must the deacons be grave**—of dignified character and deportment; serious men, free from levity and frivolity. **Not doubled-tongued**—of double speech, saying one thing to this, and a different to that; or, of deceitful speech, saying one thing, but meaning or doing another. In their official work, they are necessarily in constant intercourse with the members of the church, and prevarication or duplicity in them must be most pernicious in its influence. They are, therefore, to be men of transparent character, truthful in their words and faithful to their promises. **Not given to much wine**—not wine bibbers. Wine and strong drink were forbidden, on pain of death, to the Jewish priests, when engaged in the services of the

Tabernacle. (Lev. 10: 9.) They were also prohibited to the heathen priesthood in their temple worship. Much more, then, might we expect that a man addicted to them would be disqualified for official position in the Christian Church. (ver. 3.) **Not greedy of filthy lucre—base gains.** "All gain is filthy (literally, *base*) which is set before a man as a by-end in his work for God." (Alford.) The love of money is especially dangerous in one who, by his office, is placed in trust with the church funds, and is concerned in the administration of them. To a man greedy of gain, the temptation would be great, if not to actual theft, yet to such use of the funds as might further his personal pecuniary interests. Note the case of Judas. See John 12: 6; compare Titus 1: 11; 1 Peter 5: 2.

**9. Holding the mystery of the faith.** 'Mystery,' in the New Testament, does not ordinarily denote that which is mysterious or difficult to understand, but rather that which was once hidden—a truth, or cycle of truths, which was before undiscovered, but which has now been made known by revelation from God. It denotes here the whole cycle of truths relating to the person and work and salvation of Christ, which, once hidden from men, but now revealed in the gospel, are apprehended and received by faith. Compare Rom. 16: 26; 1 Cor. 2: 7; Gal. 3: 23; Eph. 3: 3-12. **In a pure conscience**—that is, a conscience which has been made free from guilt, and is kept pure, or in conscious integrity, by faith in Christ. The conscience, thus pure, "was to be, as it were, the insphering principle (2 Tim. 1: 3)." (Ellicott.) "The pure conscience is the coffer in which the truth is best deposited." (Van Oosterzee.) "Pure doctrine and pure conscience must always go together." (Hedinger.)

**10. And let these also**—not "also," as if in addition to the bishops, but rather, *let these, moreover*—that is, in addition to the things already required. **First be proved**—not by any formal procedure, but by a life in the church of sufficient length to test their real

11 Even so *must their wives be grave*, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

11 serve as deacons, if they be blameless. Women in like manner *must be grave*, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well. For they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus

character and ability. **Then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.** They are not to be selected from new and untried men, but from those who, after trial, have proved themselves fitted for the office. "The more prominent the place God allots any one, the more blameless should be his life, because many observe him." (Starke.)

**11. Even so must their wives.** Better, as in the Revised Version: *Women in like manner*—that is, women filling the deacon's office, deaconesses. As the words occur in the midst of a description of the qualifications of deacons, the Anglican Version, as also Conant, translates "their wives," with which accords the view of Calvin, Henry, Barnes, Conybeare, Huther, and others. Decisive reasons, however, seem here to require its reference to the deaconesses, who may, indeed, often have been wives of deacons, but who are here mentioned as the female members of the diaconate. For, 1, it is evident that deaconesses existed in some of the apostolic churches, since we read of Phebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea (Rom. 16: 1), and of certain women who at Philippi labored with Paul in the gospel, and seem to have had an official position. (Phil. 4: 3.) In the post-apostolic churches, this office certainly existed; and, indeed, the seclusion of females in the East, and the peculiar relations of the sexes in Greek cities, must have made such female officers a necessity. 2. *In like manner*, with which this verse begins, is the same transitional word that introduced the directions for the deacons, and in itself suggests the introduction of a class separate from them; and doubtless the verse was introduced at this point, because the qualifications of the deaconesses form, as will be seen, a parallel to those required of the deacons in the immediately preceding verses. 3. The Greek has not '*their wives*,' but simply *women* (*γυναικες*), without article or pronoun, and it is, therefore, properly rendered, not "their wives," but *women*, and, in this context, *female deacons*. 4. It is difficult to see why the qualifications of dea-

cons' wives should be specified, and not also those of bishops' wives; but there was a plain reason for defining the qualifications of the deaconesses, since to them was largely committed the administration of church relief, pecuniary and spiritual, among the female members of the flock. The great body of commentators, therefore, ancient and modern, have understood this passage as relating to deaconesses. **Must be grave**—dignified in deportment, serious, decorous. **Not slanderers**—literally, *not devils*, calumniators, "talebearers, carrying stories to make mischief and sow discord." It "corresponds to the 'double-tongued' (*διλόγονος*), in the males, being the vice to which the female sex is more addicted." (Alford.) **Sober**—parallel to the "not given to much wine" in the men, and perhaps, therefore, to be taken as at least including the physical sense. **Faithful in all things**—placed over against 'greedy of filthy lucre' in the men, and requiring a scrupulous fidelity in the administration of the relief funds of the church, as well as in the discharge of the other duties of the office.

**12. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife.** As in the pastor's office, so also in the deacon's, polygamy, or having more than one living wife, is a disqualification. See notes under ver. 2. **Ruling their children and their own houses well.** It seems to be implied that the deacon will ordinarily be a married man and the head of a family, over which he is required so to preside as to secure a well-ordered household. Compare ver. 2, 4.

**13. For they that have used the office of a deacon well**—better, *They that have served well as deacons*—at once a reason for requiring such qualities in the deacon and an incentive to the earnest and diligent use of them, since a great reward attaches to the office. **Purchase to (or, gain for) themselves a good degree** (or, *standing*)—literally, *step*, as the step before a door or on a staircase; hence, figuratively, a step upward, an advanced position. Of this *good standing*, or upward step, three different interpretations have been given: 1.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou

A preferment in the church, as from the deacon's to the pastor's office. 2. An advanced spiritual position in a richer religious experience and an enlarged spiritual power. 3. A higher position at last in the greater reward God will bestow upon his faithful and successful servants, as taught in the parable of the pounds. (Luke 19:11-27.) The second of these, interpreting of an advanced position in Christian experience and life, seems here best suited to the context—at least, as the main thought; since the apostle would hardly present ecclesiastical preferment as a motive to fidelity; and the reference to the higher position of the faithful in heaven, though suitable as a motive, is less consonant with the motive that follows, 'great boldness in the faith,' which plainly relates to the present life. The expression presents, therefore, as a reward of fidelity in the diaconate, a higher standing place in the Christian life in a richer consciousness of union with Christ and a more full realization of the Christian hope, although perhaps the heavenly reward need not be excluded, as it is in full accord with the doctrine of the future reward of believers as taught by Christ (Matt. 19:29; 25:34-40; Luke 19:11-27), and by the apostles (1 Cor. 3:8-15; 2 Cor. 9:6; 2 Tim. 4:7, 8; 1 Peter 5:4; 2 John 8). **And great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus**—perhaps not 'in the faith,' but as the Greek is without the article, *in faith*. The right use of the office secures a strong faith or a higher confidence in the exercise of that faith which is based on Christ.

It will be observed that here, as in the case of pastors, the qualifications emphasized are those rather of the homely virtues than of the brilliant gifts. They are qualities of character and life such as evoke the respect and love and confidence of men, and form the essential basis of religious power. The passage thus suggests, not that high culture and brilliant gifts should not be sought in church officers, but that the virtues of a solid character and a pure life are of far higher moment; and that, while the former may sometimes be wanting, the latter ought never to be absent.

Note also that here, as everywhere in the New Testament when permanent officers are mentioned, only two classes appear in the church—pastors and deacons; the qualifica-

tions of the one class adapting them to the work of public instruction and spiritual guidance in the church, those of the other fitting them for the wise and safe administration of its temporal concerns. There was no third class; but the qualifications named and instructions given all relate to these two classes only. Evidently there was no prelatical bishop at Ephesus presiding over the diocese of Asia, otherwise the injunctions here given would have been sent to him, and not to Timothy. Certainly Timothy himself was not Bishop of Ephesus, since his office was that of an evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5), traveling as an assistant to Paul (Acts 16:1-3); and he had been, at this time, only temporarily left at Ephesus for a special work (1:8), Paul himself expecting soon to return and relieve him of his charge (3:14, 15). Indeed, it is difficult to conceive an assumption more absolutely destitute of Biblical foundation than that which makes Timothy "the first Bishop of Ephesus." A prelate, or hierarchical bishop, as the head of a diocese, is wholly unknown in the New Testament.

**14-16. OBEDIENCE TO THE ABOVE INSTRUCTIONS ENFORCED BY THE DIGNITY OF THE CHURCH, AS THE HOUSE OF GOD, AND ITS IMPORTANCE AS THE PILLAR AND GROUND, OR BASE, OF THE TRUTH.**—1. Paul, though hoping to come to Timothy soon, yet contemplates delay as possible, and sends, therefore, these instructions, that he may know how to conduct himself in the affairs of the Ephesian Church. (14, 15.) 2. The importance of guiding aright the affairs of the church is shown, (a) from the exalted character of the church as "the house of God," "the church of the living God"; (b) from the momentous relation of the church to the world, as "the pillar and base of the truth," in conserving and proclaiming divine truth among men; and (c) from the sublime character of the truth, thus witnessed by the church, as the 'MYSTERY OF GODLINESS,' OR GOD INCARNATE; HIS LIFE, DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND GLORIFICATION. (15, 16.)

**14. THESE THINGS WRITE I**—the foregoing instructions, especially those relating to the qualifications of pastors and deacons. **HOPING TO COME UNTO THEE SHORTLY** (or, *more*

15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

mayest know <sup>1</sup> how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and <sup>2</sup> ground of the truth. And

1 Or, *how thou oughtest to behave thyself*. . . . . 2 Or, *stay*.

quickly). Circumstances at present portended delay, but he hoped that some change would occur in his situation, allowing him to come sooner than now seemed probable.

**15. But if I tarry long** (*if, notwithstanding my hope, I am delayed*) **that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave** (or, *conduct*) **thyself—or, how men ought to conduct themselves**. The construction admits of either translation, but the former accords better with the scope of this passage. In either case the reference is not to behavior or deportment, but to the course of action to be pursued, that thou mightest know how to act, what course of action is required in conducting the affairs of the church. **In the house of God.** The temple in Israel was “the house of God,” because he dwelt in it among his people and his visible presence was there manifested in the Shekinah above the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies. This was typical of the church. In the New Testament his redeemed people constitute his house, he dwelling in them as within a living temple. Hence the church is represented as a building, a glorious structure composed of “living stones,” “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord”; “an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Eph. 2 : 20-22; compare 1 Cor. 3 : 9-17; 2 Cor. 6 : 16; Heb. 3 : 6; 2 Peter 2 : 5. And as the whole body of his people form his living temple, so also each local church, as composed of believers united by faith to the one Lord, forms ‘the house of God,’ within which he dwells and reveals his glorious presence. **Which is** (or, *Since it is; inasmuch as it is*) **the church of the living God.** In contrast with the temple made by hands at Ephesus, enshrining the dead image of Diana, this glorious structure, in which Timothy ministered, was “a living community of saints pervaded by the living God.” The word *church* (*ekklesia*) is used in the New Testament one hundred and fifteen times. Of these, in three instances it denotes

the legislative assembly of citizens in a free Greek city; in two, the Hebrew “congregation of the Lord”; and in one hundred and ten, the Christian Church. As designating the church, it is used ninety-two times of the local church, as “the church at Jerusalem,” “the churches of Galatia”; and eighteen times, either of the whole church, conceived as composed of all the elect, who are to form one grand assembly at last in heaven, or of Christians generally, as in Acts 9 : 31: “Then had the church (corrected text) rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria.” In the text the word refers to the local church at Ephesus, but contemplated (as every true church is, in fact), as a type, a dim but real representation of the universal spiritual church. The ministry of Timothy, and of the pastors and deacons, was concerned with the affairs of this ‘church of the living God’; and hence the high qualifications required in them, and the care and order and solemnity which should mark their ministration. **The pillar and ground of the truth.** The apostle, with characteristic rapidity of transition, now changes the figure. The temple is here no longer the church, but the truth—especially the great truth of the incarnation, and of the life, death, resurrection, and universal reign of the God-man; and the church is a column and base of this temple, sustaining it, and bearing it up for the gaze and wonder and faith of men. As a column, with its base, or foundation, sustains and lifts aloft the magnificent temple, displaying its splendor and strength, and the genius and skill of its architect, even thus is each church a column and base of the truth. It is God’s chosen institution, by which his truth is upborne and made known through all ages. It is not the author of the truth, nor the authority on which the truth is published; but, receiving the truth from God as given in his word, its office is to conserve and publish it as God’s message to men. Without the church, therefore, the truth, unpreserved and unproclaimed, would perish from the earth. Some interpreters make this clause, not appositional with “the church of the living God,”

16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; <sup>1</sup> He who was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, received up in glory.

<sup>1</sup> The word *God*, in place of *He who*, rests on no sufficient ancient evidence. Some ancient authorities read *which*.

but the beginning of a new sentence—thus, “A pillar and ground of the truth, and confessedly great is the mystery of godliness.” But surely the apostle, even in his old age, could hardly have used such rhetoric. The other, and older, construction, is far more Pauline, and is consonant with his purpose here, to unfold the greatness of the church and its mission, in order to impress Timothy and the ministry of all ages with the greatness of their charge and the consequent necessity of high qualifications in those who undertake it.

**16. And without controversy**—that is, *confessedly*; it is a point that must be acknowledged—**great is the mystery.** ‘Mystery’ here, as in ver. 9, denotes, not that which cannot be apprehended or understood, but that which was once hidden or unknown; something which the reason could not have discovered, but which can be known only by revelation from God, and which, as a fact of pure revelation, can be received only by faith. This *great truth*, hitherto unrevealed and unknown, had now been made known by the actual incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and glorification of God in man; and of this truth the church is ‘the pillar and base.’ The conserving and publishing of this momentous truth constitute the mission of the church; and hence the supreme importance of this divine organization as ‘the church of the living God’ and the care with which its affairs should be conducted. **Of godliness.** This ‘mystery’—God taking on him humanity, and living, suffering, dying, rising, and reigning in humanity—is for human souls the source of godliness: in it are all possible motives to holy living. It is this great **FACT**, fully apprehended and believed in the soul, which breaks the power of sin and quickens to a new life of holiness. The all-potent revelation of the gospel is Christ as **God-MAN**; and from it, as received in the soul, comes all true godliness. For “in it Christ says, ‘Be ye holy, for I,’ who have taken your nature and joined it to the nature of the Holy One, ‘am holy.’” (Words-

worth.) **God** (properly, *who*). For reasons assigned below, I accept as the true reading here, *who* (ὅς), instead of *God* (θεός), in accordance with the decision of the great body of recent Biblical critics. Properly translated, therefore, it is, *who was manifested*, the relative referring to ‘mystery’ as its logical, though not strictly grammatical, antecedent, because the Son of God, as incarnate, is the dominant thought involved in it.

**Was manifest in the flesh**—that is, the Son of God entered into personal union with, and revealed himself in, humanity. This is the constant teaching of Scripture: “The Word was made flesh” (John 1:14); “Who, being in the form of God . . . was made in the likeness of men” (Phil. 2:6,7); “The life was manifested; and we have seen, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us” (1 John 1:2). The expression presupposes the pre-existence and the divinity of Christ. **Justified**—was shown, proved to be righteous—in the **Spirit**—the *Holy Spirit*, not Christ’s spirit, considered as the seat of his divine nature; for here there is no antithesis to “flesh” in the preceding clause, but the clauses follow the simple historical sequence in his manifestation. First, he became incarnate, or ‘was manifest in the flesh’; then his divine Sonship was demonstrated by the *Holy Spirit*, given to him and working in him. He was approved as righteous when, in token that the Father was in him “well-pleased,” the *Holy Spirit* descended on him at the baptism. (Matt. 3:16.) The Father gave “not the Spirit by measure” to him, but in unbounded fullness. He was “led by the Spirit” to his temptation (Matt. 4:1); his mighty works were effected “through the Spirit” (Matt. 12:28); and this presence and power of the *Holy Spirit* divinely attested him as righteous and authenticated his claims as the Son of God. **Seen of** (or, *appeared to*) **angels**—that is, *made himself visible* to them. The verb, though passive in form, is active in sense. Compare Acts 7:26; 26:16. The Son of man, even in the depths of his humiliation, revealed

himself to angels as the exalted Son of God; and at every step in his earthly path they saw, through the veil of his flesh, the infinite and eternal God. They recognized him even in his lowly birth. (Luke 2:9-14.) They ministered to him in the wilderness temptation, and in Gethsemane. Had he chosen to avoid arrest, "more than twelve legions of angels" would have come to defend him. (Matt. 26:33.) When he had suffered death, these glorious beings were present to witness his resurrection and to grace his triumphant ascension. (Acts 1:10, 11.) He thus, in all the vicissitudes of his earthly life, stood fully revealed before the angelic world as the God-man, and, with adoring wonder, they watched around his path from the manger to the tomb. **Preached unto the Gentiles** (or, *among the nations*). Even during our Lord's life, the salvation he brought passed beyond Israel to other peoples, as in the case of the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:26), and of the Roman centurion (Luke 7:2-10). Before he ascended, he charged his disciples to go into "all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"; and in the apostolic age Christianity achieved its widest triumphs among the Gentile nations. This was the marvel of that age, that God became Man to provide a salvation for all men, Gentiles as well as Jews. (Acts 11:18; Rom. 10:12, 13; Eph. 2:11-22; 3:8.) **Believed on in the world.** This salvation was actually effectual. Though rejected by the great body of the Jews, there were yet many who believed on him; and these earlier disciples were but the precursors and pledges of the vast multitude who, after the Holy Spirit was given, became believers in Christ and heirs of salvation.

**Received up into glory.** This was the crowning triumph of Christ, the final proof that he was God incarnate, when, ascended and glorified, he took his seat at God's right hand, and, as the God-man, the divine human King of the universe, received all power in heaven and earth. (Acts 1:9; John 17:5; Eph. 1:19-23; Phil. 2:9-11; Rev. 5:6-14.)

Such is the greatness of that truth of which the church is '*the pillar and base*'; and hence the sacredness of the work, and the required sanctity of character of those who are called to official station in it. This sublime mystery, the personal manifestation of God in man, is here outlined in successive clauses, rhythmic

in their structure. Many commentators, therefore, have regarded them as quoted by the apostle from some early confession or hymn used in the apostolic churches. It seems, however, far more natural to think that the language here was original with Paul, and, as a wonderful statement of God manifested in humanity, was afterward adopted as a creed or liturgic form, for which its rhythmic structure so well fitted it. For in Paul, as in all great writers and orators when treating of subjects in their nature sublime, the tendency is to poetic and rhythmic expression. Compare Rom. 8:38, 39; 11:33-36. Farrar versifies as follows: "And confessedly great is the mystery of godliness—who was

" Manifested in the flesh,  
Justified in the Spirit,  
Seen of angels.  
Preached among the Gentiles,  
Believed on in the world,  
Taken up in glory."

Observe the sublime character and position of the church, and its supreme importance as an outward organization. It is 'the house of God'; not a human organization, constituted and ordered by men and ruled for earthly ends, but an organization of God, constituted according to a divine ideal by a union of redeemed souls, and forming a living temple, in which dwells the living God. Its mission is to conserve and publish to the world divine truth, and especially that highest of all truths, the incarnation of the Son of God, and the life, death, resurrection, and glorification of the God-Man as the ground and the pledge of the redemption and glorification of all who believe on him. Apart from this divine organization, that momentous truth might perish from the earth, and salvation fail among men. Indeed, so important is the church that much of the New Testament is occupied with instructions respecting it. It is impossible to think, therefore, that its form and order have been left to men, to be changed from age to age, according to human caprice and shortsightedness, or that those are resting on Scriptural ground who deprecate this great institution of God as a mere outward organization, to be changed or to be dispensed with, as men may decide. Plainly, such was not Paul's conception of 'the church of the living God.'

Note, also, the dignity and solemnity of the

## CHAPTER IV.

NOW the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

<sup>1</sup> But the Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to

ministerial office. The ancient Jewish priests ministered in a temple made with hands, and enshrinning for ages not even a visible representation of God; for the Shechinah, or visible glory of God, had long since departed, and the Holy of holies was empty. But the ministration of the gospel is performed in this living temple, composed of redeemed souls and pervaded by the presence of the living God, "a habitation of God through the Spirit." How great the necessity, therefore, as the apostle infers, that those who take on them this ministration be men of Christian virtues and of holy lives, and thus be worthy of the gospel they preach and of 'the church of the living God' wherein they serve!

The reading in ver. 16, "God was manifested in the flesh," has long been held as doubtful. Manuscript and other authority exist for either *God (θεός)*, or *which (οὗ)*, or *who (ὅς)*. The evidence adduced for the respective readings may be summed up as follows: For *God (θεός)* may be adduced: 1. The uncial codices, D<sup>3</sup>, J, H, Σ<sup>5</sup>, none of which are earlier than the seventh century, and then as altered in this place by a later hand. 2. Nearly all the cursive manuscripts, which, however, do not date back of about the tenth century. 3. The citation of the passage with this reading by Chrysostom, Theodoret, Euthalius, Macedonius, and other of the later Fathers. For *which (οὗ)* may be urged: 1. The uncial codex D<sup>1</sup> of the seventh century, but only as a correction. 2. The early Latin versions, except Jerome's. For *who (ὅς)* the evidence is: 1. The uncial codices, Σ, or Sinaitic manuscript, of the fourth century, A and C, of the fifth, and F and G, of the ninth. 2. The important cursive manuscripts, 17, 73, 181, which were copied from uncial manuscripts, probably earlier than any now extant. 3. The Gothic, later Syriac, and Coptic versions; in the Peschito, or earlier Syriac, it is uncertain whether the reading is *who (ὅς)*, or *which (οὗ)*. 4. The citation of the passage in this form by the Fathers, Cyril, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Epiphanius, Macarius, and Jerome. The preponderance of external evidence is clearly in favor of *who (ὅς)*,

as the true reading: while on internal grounds it is certainly far easier to conceive that, in the intensity of doctrinal interest, especially in the Trinitarian controversies, God (*θεός*) would be substituted for who (*ὅς*), requiring only two slight marks in the uncial text, than that the opposite change should be made. In this result concur all the best critical authorities, as Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort; with De Wette, Huther, Alford, Ellicott, and Fairbairn among interpreters.

**Ch. 4: 1-5. A DEPARTURE FROM THE GOSPEL PREDICTED.**—1. The Holy Spirit distinctly predicts a departure from the faith in after times. (1.) 2. The agencies through which this will result are described under two classes: (a) The superhuman — "seducing spirits and doctrines of devils"; (b) the human — those 'speaking lies in hypocrisy,' described also as "having their conscience seared"; the latter class being the medium in and through which the former exert their power (1, 2). 3. The characteristic doctrines of these misleading teachers are stated; they inculcate, as essential to a higher sanctification, celibacy and abstinence from food which God has adapted for man; whereas all such food is lawful to believers, since it is sanctified by the sanction of God's word and by the prayer of the recipient (3-5).

**1. Now—Revised Version, better, *But*.** In contrast with "the mystery of godliness," the glorious truth that the church is upbearing before the world (3:16), the apostle now speaks of the approach of "the mystery of iniquity" (2 Thess. 2:7), whose malignant and destructive workings were even now apparent. **The Spirit speaketh expressly — plainly, distinctly.** Whether the reference here is to a special communication to the apostle himself, or to prophecies uttered through other inspired men, is left uncertain. Even in the Old Testament there are predictions, as some suppose, of a great apostasy in the Messianic age. (Dan. 7: 25; 8: 23-25; 11: 30.) The prophetic utterances of Christ, Matt. 24: 11-34, in words of marvel-

2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

2 seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies,<sup>1</sup> branded in 3 their own conscience as with a hot iron; forbidding

1 Or, seared.

ously graphic power, distinctly foretell such an event; while in some of the parables, as in that of the wheat and tares (Matt. 13) and in other passages, its dark shadow is plainly visible in the picture. It is natural, however, to think here of a direct communication of the Spirit to Paul; and this is made the more probable from the constant guidance of the Spirit which he enjoyed (Acts 16:6; 20:23), and from the fact that in an earlier epistle (2 Thess. 2) he has unfolded more fully the great apostasy of which he here sees the beginnings, and that so fully does the portentous image of this coming danger to the church loom up before him, that the thought of it pervades his epistles. (Col. 2:8, 16-23.) **That in the latter times**—rather, *in later times*. It is not spoken only of the last ages of the Christian Dispensation, but of *after times*, referring to the times following that in which the apostle is speaking. Evidently the beginnings of the apostasy are in the immediate future, as he warned the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:29, 30: "I know that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." The full and disastrous culmination of it, however, belongs to the closing period of the Christian Dispensation. "The expression 'times' (*καιρός*) or 'ages' (*αιώνες*) in Eph. 2:7 is itself proof that the apostles did not themselves conceive the coming of the end in their own time (*καιρός*). The prophecies fulfill themselves, not at once, nor once only, but repeatedly and gradually, in ascending series, up to the full end. Thus our here-given prophecy of the falling away found already a fulfillment in the then apostolic age (or, *καιρός*), and consequently measures are already enjoined on Timothy against the impending destruction of the faith. But also in later epochs of the divine kingdom, this prophecy fulfills itself, until its culminating point . . . in the time (2 Thess. 2:3) immediately preceding the second appearing of the Lord." (Beck.) **Some shall depart from the faith**—that is, from the truths of the gospel, which are the objects of faith. Of this

falling away other apostles also speak. (2 Peter 3:3; 1 John 2:18, 19.) **Giving heed to seducing spirits.** They departed from the faith through yielding to the seductive power of evil spirits, whose deceitful influences were exerted through false religious guides. (1 John 4:1, 6.) **And doctrines of devils**—or doctrines emanating from demons. The word here is not *devil* (*διάβολος*), but *demons* (*δαιμόνια*), a term which is never applied to Satan, or the devil, but in the New Testament ordinarily designates the fallen angels of whom Satan is the prince. (Matt. 9:34; 25:41.) Scripture connects them with the idolatry and oracles of the heathen, as inspiring the delusions and impieties of Paganism. (1 Cor. 10:12; James 3:15.) Perpetually seeking the ruin of men, they exhibit their most terrible physical power for evil in demoniacal possession, as Mark 5:1-9, and their most malignant influence over the soul in the errors and delusions they inspire, and the lusts and passions they inflame. These ministers of Satan rule in the life of the unregenerate world (Eph. 2:2); but they especially antagonize divine truth and grace in Christians (Eph. 6:11, 12), and are in direct, malignant opposition to the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of truth and holiness. (1 John 4:1-3, 6.) Indeed, such is human life that "a man never stands isolated; if the Divine Spirit do not lead him, the evil spirit will."

**2. Speaking lies in hypocrisy**—or, rather, *in the hypocrisy of men who speak lies*—that is, the seducing influences of the demons operate on men *in*, or *through*, hypocritical false teachers. The hypocrisy of these false guides was the sphere within which the malignant power of evil worked, and from which it issued, as a baleful, misleading influence, to delude and destroy souls. These teachers were not men of sincere, truth-loving souls, but were hypocritical; and their hypocrisy formed the point of contact between their souls and these demonic powers, and made them the medium of Satanic influence upon other souls. **Having their conscience seared with a hot iron**—or, *branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron*. (Revised Version.) The thought is not that their conscience has become

3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be

insensible, but that they stand self-convicted, consciously bearing the brand-marks of wrong doing. The ancients used a hot iron to brand the forehead of a criminal, so that thenceforth he might bear, always and everywhere, the brand-marks of his crime. Thus these men, while professing to be guides to righteousness, had their own conscience covered with the brand-marks of sin. Thus Robinson: "*Branded in their own consciences*; having the marks, *stigmata*, of their guilt burnt in upon their consciences, that is, being ever conscious of their guilt like branded criminals." Thus, also, Van Oosterzee, Alford, Ellicott, Wiesinger, Fausset, and Fairbairn.

**3. Forbidding to marry**—requiring abstinence from marriage, professedly as a means to higher sanctity. This was already a familiar conception among the Jews, from the ascetic principles of the Essenes and the Therapeute. It might, also, find support in a mistaken interpretation of our Lord's language, Matt. 19: 10-12; and also of Paul's, 1 Cor. 7: 8, 32-34. This tendency to depreciate marriage, although in fundamental opposition to Scripture (Gen. 2: 23, 24; 1 Cor. 9: 5; Heb. 13: 4), was already present in the Ephesian Church; and it afterward spread through all the churches, first in the Gnostic asceticism of the earlier Christian centuries, and then in the monasticism and the celibacy of the clergy in the Romish Church. The Council of Trent, in its tenth article on "marriage," says: "Whoever shall say that the married state is to be preferred to a state of virginity, or celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity, or celibacy, than to be joined in marriage; let him be accursed!" **Commanding to abstain from meats.** 'Commanding' is not expressed in the Greek, but is implied in the preceding participle. They forbade certain kinds of food, and perhaps all food at certain seasons. The tendency to discriminate in food may have had its root in the Jewish distinction between clean and unclean animals, a view made probable by Col. 2: 16, where the errorists are plainly Jews. This distinction between meats Christianity had abolished. (Acts 10: 15; Col. 2: 14-17; Rom.

14: 14, 20.) But the asceticism here described was, doubtless, also largely inspired by that Alexandrian and Asiatic philosophy, from which, when combined with Christianity, Gnosticism was at a later period developed, in one form of which, that of the Encratites, or Purists, marriage and animal food were forbidden. In the orthodox churches themselves, also, the tendency very early arose to regard celibacy as a superior spiritual condition, and abstinence from food as a special virtue. **Which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving.** In that God created food adapted for man, he thereby showed that it was intended for man; but only as it is received with a grateful recognition of God as its Author and Giver. **Of them which believe and know** (or, *acknowledge*) **the truth.** This defines those whom chiefly God had in view in creating food; it was his own people. The true end in the creation of food was to sustain and bless the spiritual as well as the bodily life; only those, therefore, who partake of food in faith, with adoring thanksgiving to God, receive its actual fullness of blessing, since in them alone is the purpose of its creation fulfilled. So far, therefore, from its being forbidden to them, it is for them only, in the highest sense, that it is intended. "As if those that wanted faith and saving knowledge, did but *usurp* the bread they eat. And, indeed, it is certain that the wicked have no right to the creatures of God in such ample sort as the godly have." (Sanderson.) "Properly speaking, God has appointed to his children alone the whole world and all that is in the world. For this reason, they are called the heirs of the world." (Calvin.)

**4. For every creature of God is good**—that is, everything created by God as food. It is in itself good, since it was made by him, and was pronounced by him at the creation "very good" (Gen. 1: 31); hence the prohibition of its use for the purpose intended by him is wrong and evil, and especially so in the case of those who eat with a thankful recognition of it as God's gift. **And nothing to be refused**—of the things of God made for food,

5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

5 rejected, if it be received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified through the word of God and prayer.

"so that there is no sin in the use of them, nor any religion in the forbearing of them, or abstaining from them; this liberty was given us by God, and restored by Christ." (Burkitt.)

**If it be received with thanksgiving.** See Romans 14:6. A thing in itself good may fail of its end, or even prove a curse, when received with an evil mind; and food only attains its true end when it awakens the thankfulness of a believing, adoring heart.

**5. For it is sanctified—hallowed,** "fit for the godly use of Christian men." (Alford.) **By the word of God**—that is, its use is warranted by the word of God. It is shown to be divinely intended for man, not only by the Creator's adaptation of it to him, but also by direct sanction of Scripture. See Gen. 1:29; 9:3, 4. Others, as Alford, Ellicott, Wiesinger, understand "the word of God" here as "Scripture language, used in the form of the blessing before meals, which thus hallowed the food."

**And prayer**—that the food may be sanctified for use. The custom of asking a blessing before meals, in itself so suitable, is enforced by our Lord's example. (Mark 8:6; 14:22) It was evidently common among the primitive Christians. (Acts 27:35; Rom. 14:6; 1 Cor. 10:30; 14:16.)

"It is a beastly way of eating, when we sit down at table without any prayer, and, when we have eaten to the full, depart in utter forgetfulness of God." (Calvin.) The beautiful formula of blessing given in the Apostolical Constitutions, VII. 49, illustrates the ancient practice: "Blessed be thou, O Lord, who hast fed me from my youth, who givest food to all flesh. Fill thou our hearts with joy and gladness, that, having always what sufficeth, we may abound unto all good works, in Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom be unto thee honor, glory, and power, forever and ever, Amen." The thought of the apostle, then, is: Food, having been formed by the Creator for man, and in Scripture expressly given him, should not be forbidden to man; and least of all to the Christian, who alone uses it according to its original purpose, and who thus alone finds in it the spiritual, as well as the material, good designed. He thus shows that asceticism is everywhere unnatural, but most of all in the Christian Church.

The general argument of the passage may be

thus stated: God, when speaking in the two spheres of nature and religion, does not contradict himself. In the very constitution of the sexes, he has ordained marriage; and in the creation of food adapted to man's needs, he has appointed it for man's use. To these fundamental laws thus ordained in nature, he does not oppose other and contrary ones in religion. He does not contradict himself; nature and religion, therefore, as they both come from him, cannot, in their fundamental requirements, be opposed. Then the doctrine, as taught by these errorists, that the true and highest piety can be attained only by abstinence from marriage and food, must be essentially false, and all systems of asceticism, by the fact that they thus contravene great natural laws of God, are clearly proved as not from him. They are essentially false and evil, as, indeed, all history shows, in the fearful and wide-spread immorality to which they have always and inevitably tended.

It is evident, however, that this is not inconsistent with those passages in which fasting, and even abstinence from marriage, are encouraged; for these are plainly not rules intended for the ordinary conditions of life, but applicable only in special and exceptional circumstances. Thus fasting is presented, not as an habitual, but as an occasional duty, for special ends (Matt. 6:16, 17; 17:21; Mark 2:20; Acts 13:2, 3); and, in like manner, abstinence from marriage. (Matt. 19:12; 1 Cor. 7:8, 26, 27.) As in abnormal conditions of the body, the physician prescribes abstinence, so in abnormal conditions of the soul or of the Church, Scripture in like manner prescribes it; but in neither case could the prescription be made a rule in the normal conditions of life without evil result. "If temporary fasting should dispose and enable one to fight more successfully against the lusts of the flesh, or if by abstaining from marriage one could, in particular spheres of labor, or in certain conjunctures of the church's history more effectually serve the interests of the gospel than otherwise, then the higher principles of that gospel, the nobler ends of a Christian calling, will undoubtedly justify the restraint or the sacrifice. . . . This is an entirely different thing from that morbid and mawkish asceticism, which, in attempting to soar above the

6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness.

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is

divinely appointed order and constitution of things, imputes a character of evil to what is in itself good, and hence withdraws men from those social environments which, as a rule, are necessary to the well-being of society, and to the full-orbed completeness of Christian character." (Fairbairn.)

**6-10. TIMOTHY IS TO SHUN FOOLISH AND SUPERSTITIOUS FABLES, AND CULTIVATE PRACTICAL PIETY RATHER THAN BODILY AUSTERITIES.**—1. In putting the church on their guard against this impending danger of defection from the faith, he will act the part of a good minister of Christ; but trifling and foolish fables he must shun, and discipline himself rather unto godliness, since ascetic, bodily discipline is profitable for little, while godliness is profitable for all things, seeing it has promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. (6-8.) 2. This promise is sure, and is worthy of all acceptance; for it is in view of it the apostles and their fellow-laborers are enduring toil and conflict, their hope of its fulfillment being fixed on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe. (9-10.)

**6. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things**—or, *suggesting these things to the brethren*. He is to put them on their guard, and keep them on their guard, against this danger of defection from the faith, by instructing and warning them. **Thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus**—*wilt be, will act as*. Such warning and instruction will show thee to be a good minister of Christ. **Nonnourished up in** (or, *nourishing thyself in*; or, *by means of*) **the words of faith** (or, *of the faith*)—that is, of the doctrines of the gospel. "Ever training thyself in the words of the faith." (Alford.) He had from childhood been carefully instructed in the truths of religion. (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15.) He had been trained in the truths of the gospel by Paul himself. (2 Tim. 2:15.) The apostle would have him now himself continue this training, and by guarding the church against error, act as befits one thus instructed. **And**

6 If thou put the brethren in mind of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished in the words of the faith, and of the good doctrine which thou hast followed *until now*: but 8 refuse profane and old wives' fables. And exercise thyself unto godliness: for bodily exercise is profit-

**of good doctrine** (or, *of the good instruction*) **whereunto thou hast attained** (rather, *which thou hast diligently followed*; or, *hast closely followed*). He had received good instruction, and, with thorough understanding of it, had thus far carefully followed it. The word here rendered *diligently followed* is translated in Luke 1:8, "having had perfect understanding," and 2 Tim. 3:10, "hast fully known."

**7. But refuse profane and old wives' fables**—*shun, or, excuse thyself from*. Have nothing to do with, avoid, the morally fruitless and silly fictions which are in circulation. These abounded in the heathen mythologies and in the Jewish traditions; and the tendency, it seems, was already present to connect such mythical legends with the Christian religion, especially as recommending asceticism by fables exalting its miraculous results. They were 'profane,' as derogatory to God and religion; they were 'old wives' fables,' in that they were senseless, silly, absurd—the mere croning of women who had reached the ability of second childhood. **And exercise thyself rather unto godliness.** As the athlete trains his body, so do thou, with strenuous effort, train thyself to true piety in heart and life. Instead of concerning thyself with such fables, seek personal holiness and the virtues of a life of practical godliness. See the imagery vividly depicted (1 Cor. 9:24-27), and the injunction reiterated with added force. (6:11, 12; 2 Tim. 2:22, 23; Heb. 5:14; 12:11.)

**8. For bodily exercise**—the practice of asceticism, in the mortification of the body, as in abstinence from marriage and food, in praise of which, doubtless, these fables were related. Thus Ambrose, Calvin, Grotius, Neander, Wiesinger, Barnes, and Ellicott. Others, however, understand it literally of athletic training in the gymnasium, here contrasted with spiritual training in practical godliness. The former seems to me to be preferred, as, on the whole, better suited to the general context, in which asceticism is the chief subject, and its undue exaltation is deprecated. **Profiteth**

profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

9 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.

10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

able<sup>1</sup> for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptation. For to this end we labour and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men,

<sup>1</sup> Or, for little.

**little**—or, *is profitable for little*, is of little or limited value; *for little* stands in contrast with ‘unto all things,’ below. Fasting and the denial of bodily gratification have a proper place and value; for there are occasions when Christians ought to fast and mortify the body (Matt. 4: 2; 6: 17; 9: 15; 17: 21; Acts 13: 2, 3; 14: 23; 1 Cor. 7: 5); but these occasions are exceptional, and the value of such austerities is small, affecting the well-being only within a narrow limit. Possibly the exhortation here, as also in 5: 23, may suggest that Timothy himself had tendencies to asceticism which the apostle deemed excessive. **But godliness**—piety springing from faith, practical religion in heart and life—is **profitable unto all things**—for the entire well-being, bodily and spiritual, temporal and eternal. It tends to the welfare of soul as well as body, of the whole being in every possible relation and condition, for eternity as well as time. **Having** (or, *seeing it has*) **promise of the life that now is**—the present life on earth. Religion alone secures a true well-being in this life and obtains life’s real good, since it places the man in right relations to God and the world, and fits him for the true enjoyment of all earthly good. Hence the richest promises of earthly blessing are made to Christians. See Deut. 4: 40; 5: 33; 1 Kings 3: 7-13; Psalms 23: 37; 84: 11; 112; Isa. 33: 16; 46: 4; Matt. 6: 33; Mark 10: 29, 30; Rom. 8: 28; 1 Cor. 3: 21, 22; Eph. 6: 2, 3; Phil. 4: 19. They alone extract the real good of the present life; and to them all needful blessings are assured throughout its manifold phases of youth and age, health and sickness, joy and sorrow, honor and dishonor, life and death. **And of that which is to come.** It insures the highest well-being, the richest good, of all the future, eternal life. Godliness has the promise of both worlds, assuring the highest welfare, bodily and mental, moral and spiritual. (John 3: 16; 14: 2, 3; Rev. 2: 10.) Others, however, limit the promise to spiritual, eternal life, which already exists in the soul (John 5: 24), and regard it as assuring to the believer the

richest experiences of that life here and hereafter. “It is the salvation-life, embracing time and eternity, with the enjoyment of divine grace in its spiritual forces and blessings.” (Beck.)

**9. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation**—referring to the promise attached to godliness. (1: 15.) That promise of life in its highest well-being, here and hereafter, is sure, and is worthy of all acceptation.

**10. For therefore**—that is, *in view of, inspired by*, this promise—**we both labour and suffer reproach**—or, *we toil and strive*. As a confirmation of the certainty of this promise, he shows that it is in view of this the apostles and their fellow-workers are toiling and striving. They were enduring the labors and conflicts they met, trusting in the certain fulfillment of this great promise. *Strive* is the reading in most of the best manuscripts, as the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, and Ephraim; many of the expositors, however, decide for ‘suffer reproach,’ the reading of the Common Version. **Because we trust in** (*have fixed our hope on*) **the living God**—or, *on God as the living God*. This is the ground of their confidence respecting the fulfillment of the promise; their hope is not fixed on the dead idols of heathenism, but on the true and living God, who is himself life and the Fountain of life, and who is, therefore, able to fulfill his word. “It was because they had hoped upon the living God they could so confidently reckon on an endless heritage of peaceful and blessed life, and so willingly submit to all the privations and toils that might meet them in pursuit of it; for he who is himself the Living One, having the very fountain of life in perpetual freshness and inexhaustible sufficiency, is, in this case, the surety and promise.” (Fairbairn.)

**Who is the Saviour of all men.** God is the Saviour of all men: 1. As the Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor of all men. (Job. 7: 20; Matt. 5: 45; Acts 17: 24-28.) He preserves and blesses the lives of all men in his benevolent, providential administration. 2. As the Author

11 These things command and teach.

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

11 specially of them that believe. These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity.

of salvation for all men, a salvation ample for all and offered to all. (2:4-6; Mark 16:15, 16; John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9.) Here the emphasis is on the first of these senses: God is the Preserver and Benefactor of all men. **Specially of those that believe.** While he is the Saviour of all, he is the Saviour, in an especial sense, of believers as his redeemed people. This may refer: 1. To that temporal salvation which the God-man, now exalted on the throne of the universe as Head over all things for his church, secures for his redeemed people, causing all things to work together for their good (Rom. 8:28), and employing "all power in heaven and in earth" to defend and support and bless them even in this earthly life. There is a special providence exercised over every believing soul by virtue of its relation to Christ. (2 Kings 6:16, 17; Ps. 34:7, 10; Luke 12:7; Acts 18:9, 10; 26:17; 2 Tim. 4:17, 18.) Or 2. To that eternal salvation which, in the amplitude of its provision, is provided for all and offered to all, but which, by God's special grace, is made effectual for believers in the actual deliverance from wrath and sin, and the attainment of everlasting life. "God is the Saviour of all men in *will*; and he is the Saviour of all who believe, not only in will, but also in *effect*." (Wordsworth.) Of believers, Christ said: "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." (John 10:28.) Alford well expresses the general force of the reasoning: "If God be thus willing for all to be saved, how much more shall he save them that put their trust in him?"

**11-16. ADMONITIONS TO PERSONAL HOLINESS AND MINISTERIAL FIDELITY.**—1. These things Timothy is to teach and enjoin; but while so doing, he is to show in himself a maturity of understanding and an example of Christian character and life, such that none shall find occasion to despise his youth. (11, 12.) 2. During the absence of the apostle he is to conduct the public services of the Christian assembly, and in this work make full use of the gift received through prophetic revelation and recognized as in him at his ordination. (13, 14.) 3. He is to be wholly absorbed in his work, so that his growth in qualification for it may be apparent to all; and he is assured

that, in such faithful performance of the duties of his office, he will promote alike his own salvation and the salvation of those who hear him. (15, 16.)

**11. THESE THINGS COMMAND AND TEACH—**the things just mentioned concerning ascetic austerities and the supreme value of godliness, as having promise of the life now and hereafter.

**12. LET NO MAN DESPISE THY YOUTH—**give no one occasion to despise thee on account of thy youth. "Let the gravity of thy life supply the want of years." (Chrysostom.) If Timothy was twenty years old when Paul took him as an assistant at Lystra, A. D. 51, he was now, A. D. 66, about thirty-five or six, a very young man compared with Paul, whose apostolic authority he was temporarily representing in the important church at Ephesus, and especially as compared with the presbyters and other officers, who had doubtless been chosen, as was usual, from the more aged members, but whom he was called to instruct, and probably in some instances to rebuke. (5:1.) Possibly his comparative youth had elsewhere tended to his disparagement, and it was the more important that, in his present responsible post, he give no occasion for it in his public work and conduct. (1 Cor. 16:11.) **BUT BE THOU AN EXAMPLE OF THE BELIEVERS—**or, *prove thyself a pattern, a model.* The danger arising from his comparative youth, he is to avert by presenting in himself a model of sound understanding and Christian character, such as would command respect for him notwithstanding his youth. This is a first duty in the minister; in understanding, character, and life he is to be a safe model for his people. On this will depend the strength of his pastoral authority, and the weight of his pulpit instruction. Compare Titus 2:7, 8; Phil. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:9; 1 Peter 5:3. **IN WORD—**in discourse, whether public or private; careful in speech. **IN CONVERSATION—**or, *conduct*; in deportment, behavior, course of life. **IN CHARITY—**or, *love*; love to God, to the brethren, and to all men; his life is to be inspired by, and insphered in, love. **IN FAITH—**firm confidence in, and ad-

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was

herence to, God and his word, shown in his teaching, his spirit, and his life. In the first couplet, *in word and conduct*, the apostle has set forth the exterior life; in the second, *in love and faith*, the interior life, as these are the regnant, inward, impulsive forces in true living. **In purity**—in holiness, moral purity. “Simplicity of holy motive followed out in consistency of holy action.” (Alford.) The word doubtless includes chastity, purity of heart and conduct in relation to the other sex, but it is of wider scope, denoting moral purity in all the affections and relations; and here it signifies the spiritual atmosphere in which the whole life moves, singleness of moral purpose, elevation of moral thinking and feeling. As the minister’s position is necessarily conspicuous, he is to be a shining example, a transparent, pure man, illustrating in himself the excellence and power of religion. The words ‘*in spirit*,’ inserted in the Common Version, are not found in the best MSS., and are now rejected as not genuine by all authorities.

**13. Till I come.** Timothy, then, was not “bishop of Ephesus,” but was only filling temporarily the apostle’s place there in the general supervision, till Paul himself should return. (1:3; 3:14.) No hint is given in Scripture that he filled any permanent office in that or any other city; but the reverse is clearly implied. The work he was performing there is expressly called that of an evangelist, and soon after he is summoned by Paul to Rome. (2 Tim. 4:5, 9.) He nowhere appears in any other character than as an evangelist, assisting the apostle in his itinerant work. That he was ever bishop of Ephesus has no support in Scripture, and rests only on a very weak tradition. **Give attendance to (the) reading**—that is, as the article in the Greek indicates, the public reading of the Scriptures in the Christian assembly. This had always formed an important part of synagogue worship (Luke 4:16, 17; Acts 13:15), and it was from the first adopted as a part of the public service in Christian churches. It is probable that already some of the New Testament writings had a place among the Scriptures thus read. See Col. 4:16; 1 Thess. 5:21, 27; 2 Peter 3:15, 16; Rev. 1:3. At the date of this Epistle,

13 Till I come, give heed to reading, to exhortation, to teaching. Neglect not the gift that is in thee,

A. D. 66, First and Second Thessalonians had been written thirteen years; Galatians, ten; First and Second Corinthians, nine; Romans, eight; Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, Philemon, and Hebrews, three; while the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts, with the Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude, were probably already widely copied and circulated. Copies of most of these would very early find their way to so great a centre as Ephesus, and would there meet a reverent reception, as the utterances of inspired men. **To (the) exhortation**—referring to that form of public address which is specially intended to excite the feelings and impel to action. **To (the) doctrine**—the public instruction, in which the purpose is to enlighten the understanding by reasoning, either in unfolding and establishing truth, or in exposing and refuting error. Both exhortation and teaching are mentioned as *charisms* in ordinary exercise in the church. (Rom. 12:7, 8.) Evidently the Scriptures read, as furnishing the true incentives to Christian action and the materials of Christian knowledge, formed the basis of exhortation to duty and of instruction in truth; and the three words, ‘*reading*,’ ‘*exhortation*,’ ‘*doctrine*’ or *teaching*, designated the chief parts of the public service with which Timothy was concerned.

**14. Neglect not the gift that is in thee**—“do not leave unexercised the gift,” but use it in thy public work in the church, in the reading, the exhortation, the teaching. *Gift* (*χάρισμα*) is used seventeen times in the New Testament, and has the following senses: 1. Divine grace in salvation. (Rom. 5:15, 16; 6:23; 11:29.) 2. Divine grace in deliverance from peril. (2 Cor. 1:11.) 3. Intellectual and spiritual gifts, sometimes natural and ordinary (Rom. 1:11; 1 Cor. 7:7; 1 Peter 4:10), sometimes extraordinary, either natural gifts specially enlarged and exalted by the Spirit, or wholly supernatural, as the gift of miracles. (1 Cor. 1:7; 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31.) 4. The gift for the ministry. (2 Tim. 1:6.) Here the obvious reference, required by the context, is to the gift possessed by Timothy for his public work, as connected with the reading, the exhortation, the teaching, wherein he is exhorted to employ his gift. There is no hint that this gift was other than

given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; 16 that thy progress may be manifest unto all. Take

natural, such as "the brethren at Lystra and Iconium" had already perceived in him, when they commended him to Paul as a fitting assistant in his missionary work (Acts 16:1-3); although it is not improbable that, by the imposition of the apostle's hands at his ordination, this gift was enlarged and exalted by the special influences of the Holy Spirit then received. This gift, or *charism*, for the evangelist's work is compared (2 Tim. 1:6) to a holy spark, or flame, kindled on the soul by the Holy Spirit, which, like the flame on the ancient altar, must never go out, but be kept ever burning by constant use; "stir up," *rekindle* "the gift of God." That this was some invisible gift, or secret virtue, trickling from the apostolic fingers, to be transmitted in like manner through the ages by successive episcopal ordinations, as something essential to a valid ministry, is a grotesque assumption, belonging to the realm rather of fable than of fact, and so utterly without basis in Scripture, here or elsewhere, as to find no place in sober exegesis. **Which was given thee by prophecy**—referring to some prophecy, uttered by the Holy Spirit, perhaps through prophets at Lystra and Iconium (1:18; Acts 3:1-3; 16:2), designating Timothy to the work of the ministry and predicting his distinguished success in it. Probably this designation by the Spirit led to his ordination, and the gift, which had already been discerned in him, was on that occasion enlarged and exalted into a *charism*, or spiritual gift, by the Holy Spirit, imparted through the laying on of an apostle's hands. "He had not only been chosen by the judgment of men, in the ordinary way, but had been previously named by the Spirit." (Calvin.) **With the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.** The gift was imparted *in connection with* the imposition of the hands of the elders of the church where he was ordained, probably at Lystra; but as a *charism*, it was the direct result of the imposition of Paul's hands, who doubtless united with the presbyters in the act, and through whom, as an apostle, the Holy Spirit was given, illumining and elevating the natural gift before existing, and making a spiritual gift for the work of an evangelist.

The doctrine "of the laying on of hands" is named among the rudimentary teachings of the Christian religion. (Heb. 6:1, 2.) As a form, it is used: 1. To confer or invoke a blessing on another. (Gen. 48:14; Matt. 19:15.) 2. To signify the laying of sin on the victim, or on the scapegoat, in the ancient sacrifices. (Lev. 8:14.) 3. To impart healing power. (Mark 6:5; Luke 4:40; 13:18; Acts 28:8.) 4. By apostles, in the exercise of their special prerogative, to confer the Holy Spirit. (Acts 8:17, 18; 2 Tim. 1:6.) 5. To consecrate to a sacred office, or special religious work. (Num. 8:10, 11; 27:23; Acts 6:6; 13:8; 1 Tim. 5:22.) Here the reference is to consecration to office, which, according to an apparently uniform custom in the apostolic churches, was done by the imposition of the hands of the ministry, connected with prayer. The word 'presbytery' is used in the New Testament as referring: 1. To the Jewish Sanhedrin. (Luke 22:6; Acts 22:5.) 2. To the body of elders which presided over a Christian congregation, but is only here found as a direct designation of them. (Acts 14:23; 20:17; James 5:14.)

**15. Meditate upon** (*be mindful of, or, care for, be concerned for*) **these things**—that is, the things commanded above, especially those in which his ministerial gift should be used. It directly enjoins, not so much reflection, or thought, on them, as care for them, interest in them. **Give thyself wholly to them**—literally, *be in them*. Have thy whole being in them; be entirely absorbed, engrossed, in them. He must not be diverted from his work to other interests, however excellent they may be, whether science, literature, art, society, polities, or earthly business. His whole being, in every faculty of body and soul, is to be given, without reserve and with hearty enthusiasm, to the work of the ministry. This is his solemn duty, and it is the essential condition of genuine success. **That thy profiting** (*progress*) **may appear to all**—thy growth in qualification; thy advancement in knowledge, wisdom, holiness, and ministerial power. "Implying, first, that a perceptible advance in the things which constitute a faithful and effective ministry is what may be justly expected even in the most quali-

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and to thy teaching. Continue in these things; for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee.

## CHAPTER V.

**R**EBUKE not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; 2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

fied servant of God; and then that the way to effect this is by a sincere and devoted application to the work itself." (Fairbairn.) "Profiting" (progress). Compare for the use of the word, Phil. 1:12, 25.

**16. Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine.** The first care of the minister should be for his personal character and life, that he may be in these an example to the flock; for without a pure life all else is worthless. (6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22.) Next, he is to look well to his teaching, alike as to its truth, that it be the pure word of God, and as to its adaptation and power, that his discourse be seasonable, and in manner and force worthy of the great themes he handles. (2 Tim. 2:15.) **Continue in them**—steadfastly pursue thy work. Let nothing turn thee aside from it. (Acts 20:24.) **For in doing this**—not *by* doing this, as if this would be the procuring cause of salvation, but *in* doing this. We are not saved *by* our duties, but *in* them, as the sphere within which, and the means through which, the grace of God saves us. **Thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.** The ministry, faithfully exercised, furnishes the most favorable conditions for salvation, in purifying, enlarging, and ennobling the soul, and preparing it for glory. (Ezek. 33:9; James 5:20.) "In striving to save others, the minister is really caring for his own salvation." (Wiesinger.) Fidelity, also, promotes the salvation of his hearers; souls are thereby won to Christ. The richest promises of success here and of glory hereafter are given to the faithful minister. (Dan. 12:3; Mark 1:17; John 4:36; Acts 11:24; 14:1; 2 Tim. 4:7.) "As the unfaithfulness or carelessness of the pastor is ruinous to the church, so the cause of salvation is justly ascribed to his faithfulness and diligence. True, it is God alone that saves; and not even the smallest portion of his glory can be lawfully bestowed on men. But God parts with no portion of his glory when he employs the agency of men for bestowing salvation." (Calvin.) "Few are the

1 Rebuke not an elder, but exhort him as a father: 2 the younger men as brethren: the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, in all purity.

devoted ministers of Christ who are not permitted to see evidence even here that their labor has not been in vain. Let not, then, the faithful preacher be discouraged. A single soul rescued from death will be a gem in his eternal crown brighter by far than ever sparkled on the brow of royalty." (Barnes.)

**Ch. 5:1, 2. SPIRIT AND MANNER OF ADMINISTERING REPROOF.**—He is enjoined to use entreaty rather than harsh rebuke, exercising toward the aged due reverence, and toward all genuine tenderness of heart, with purity in motive and act.

**1. Rebuke**—literally, *strike, or smite*, then applied to sharp, or harsh reproof. **Not an elder**—*an aged man.* 'Elder' here is evidently not used as the official title of presbyter, since it stands contrasted with "the younger men," mentioned immediately after. The minister, while faithful in the rebuke of sin, is to observe the natural proprieties of life. Respect for age is a dictate of nature, as well as an express command of Scripture. "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God; I am the Lord." (Deut. 19:32; 1 Peter 5:5.) This reverence for age, often conspicuously absent in the Western world, ever has been one of the common and beautiful traits in Oriental life. While the duty of all, it should be specially prominent in the young minister, not only toward the honored and good, but also toward those whose misconduct requires admonition. **But exhort him as a father.** He is not to denounce with harsh reprimand, but to exhort, or entreat, as one would entreat an erring father. **The younger men as brethren**—not harshly, arrogantly, but with the sympathy and affection one would use in seeking to reclaim a brother.

**2. The elder women as mothers.** Deal with them, not severely and sternly, but as a man would deal with his mother, in leading

her out of error and sin into truth and holiness. **The younger as sisters, with all purity.** Purity here, as 4: 12, has the broader sense of moral purity in general, but, in this connection, undoubtedly, emphasizes chastity in spirit, manner, and act. Even in his admonition of the other sex, he is to maintain perfect purity, so guarding the sacredness of his character, that the heart be preserved incorrupt, and that neither by tone, or look, or word, or act, the shadow of suspicion shall rest on his intentions and conduct. "The 'all' here implies, with every caution, so as not to give the slightest suspicion." (Bloomfield.)

**3-16. DUTY OF THE CHURCH IN REGARD TO THE CARE OF WIDOWS.**—From the first, widows were recipients of the special care and bounty of the church. (Act. 6:1.) It is obvious, however, that, as Christianity extended, definite regulations would be needed to prevent the abuse of this beneficent provision, and define the limits within which it was to be applied. Church charity might otherwise only foster idleness and pauperism, with all their attendant evils, and might prove, as public charities have sometimes proved, a curse rather than a blessing. The apostle therefore states four prerequisites for admission into the number of widows supported by the church. It is required of the applicant: 1. That she be in actual need, without relatives to support her. 2. That she has reached sixty years of age. 3. That she has sustained irreproachable marital relations. 4. That she has made a good reputation for home virtues and works of benevolence. The reasons assigned for these limitations are: (a) As to her desolation; that, when there are children, or grandchildren, these ought to show filial piety by giving her the needed support, so that the church, thus exempted from the care of such, may be able to relieve those wholly without kindred. (b) As to the age required; that the younger widows, by receiving church support, would be likely to fall into idleness and gossip, and, in the desire for remarriage, would yield to a wanton, sensual disposition, such as could only be cherished in a heart lost to the simplicity and purity of its first faith in Christ, and thus resting under condemnation.

Most modern interpreters, as Huther, Hofmann, Van Oosterzee, Wiesinger, Alford, and Ellicott, suppose that here, at least in verses 9,

and 10, the widows referred to formed a body either of female presbyters, or of deaconesses. The verb, to *enroll, to put on a list, or register* (*καταλέγειν*), they interpret of enrollment on a list of church officers. It seems, however, far more natural to understand it of enrollment on the list of widows supported by the church, especially as the support of widows is plainly the general subject of the whole passage. That these widows cannot have filled any active official position seems plain from the following considerations: 1. They must be at least sixty years old, an age which ordinarily precludes active duties, such as devolved on the deaconesses, and the later order of female presbyters; and this would be especially the case in the East, where woman, as a general fact, decays much earlier than in the West. 2. No duties whatever are assigned them in this passage, or even intimated as performed by them. The only description of their life is that, being without kindred and without family cares, they waited continually on God in "supplications and prayers." The passage therefore contains no evidence of the official position of the widows, but implies the reverse. That being supported by the church and wholly without household cares, they performed much useful service in their personal influence and their labors in the church is indeed probable; and that, out of this body of widows supported by the church was derived, at a later period, the order of female presbyters, of whom Tertullian apparently speaks, is in itself not unlikely; but neither in this passage, nor in any other in the New Testament, is there the slightest hint of an official order of widows. This idea is imported into the passage from a much later usage found in the patristic churches; a method of interpretation which involves, not merely an anachronism, but also a false principle by which other patristic additions to Christianity are foisted upon Scripture. There is no credible witness to such an order of female presbyters before Tertullian, more than a century after the death of the last apostle. Thus nearly all the ancient commentators, with Whitby, Neander, Fairbairn, and others among the modern.

**I. 3-8. DUTY OF THE CHURCH TO MAKE PROVISION FOR WIDOWS WHO ARE IN ACTUAL DESOLATION AND NEED.—1.** Widows who are without kindred and in need, are to

3 Honour widows that are widows indeed.

4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for this is good and acceptable before God.

5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

be relieved by the church; but widows who have children or grandchildren, should be supported by them, as a duty required by filial gratitude and acceptable to God. (3, 4.) 2. The reason for this restriction in church support: The widow who is thus left desolate, being without earthly dependence and care, has her hope fixed on God, and devotes herself continually to supplication and worship; while the widow who, being not thus in actual need, lives luxuriously, is, as to the true end of life, dead while she lives. (5, 6.) 3. These commands respecting widows Timothy is to enjoin, that the church may not be subject to reproach; but if any person neglects to make provision for those belonging to his own household, he shows himself false to the gospel and inferior even to the heathen. (7, 8.)

**3. Honour widows that are widows indeed**—that is, who are truly *widowed, bereaved, desolate*, which indeed is, in the original, the import of the word *widow*; one who is in actual desolation and destitution, and is thus dependent on church support. ‘Honor’ by placing them among the number deemed worthy to be supported by the church. The word contains the idea not only of respect, consideration, but also in such a connection as this, that of temporal support. (Ver. 17; Matt. 15:4-6; Acts 28:10.) It suggests that such relief is not to be dealt out to them as to mere paupers, in a manner to degrade them, but as to Christian women whom the church holds in honor, and to whom it thus shows honor. Care for widows was a marked feature in the Old Testament period (Exod. 22:22-24; Deut. 24:17-19); and in the apostolic churches it was very early made a prominent duty (Acts 6:1). It is one of the most natural and beautiful forms of Christian beneficence.

**4. But if any widow hath children or nephews** (or, *grandchildren*). It is implied that they are of fitting age and circumstances to relieve her need. **Let them learn**—that is, the children or grandchildren. Many of the older interpreters, and some of the later, refer this to the widows as enjoining them not to forsake their children or grandchildren, but

3 Honour widows who are widows indeed. But if any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them learn first to shew piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents: for this is acceptable in the sight of God. Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, hath her hope set on God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and

to rear them piously, and thus requite the pious care which they (the widows) themselves received from their own parents. But this view seems excluded by the following considerations: 1. Such an exhortation would be wholly needless; the natural mother-love would keep them from abandoning their children. 2. The widow here is evidently contrasted with the widow in verse 3, as one who, having relatives, is not “desolate,” and is not to be supported by the church. 3. Not only does the plural form, ‘let them learn,’ suggest a reference to the children, but the whole subsequent context favors this reference—as, for example, the words “show piety” and “requite their parents” can only be applied to the widows by a very forced and unnatural process. **First to show piety at home (toward their own house) and to requite their parents.** The children or grandchildren are to show their filial piety by providing for the widowed mother or grandmother, and thus requite her care for them. **For that is good and acceptable before God**—because in so doing they are pleasing to God. (Eph. 6:2,3.) The duty of support rests on them *first*, before it comes on the church. The Pharisaic tradition justified the child in devoting his means on God’s altar, though he thereby left his parents in want; but Jesus rebuked it as a transgression of the divine law. (Matt. 15:1-9; Eph. 6:1,2.) The words ‘good and,’ placed in the Common Version before ‘acceptable,’ are wanting in all old manuscripts, and are rejected by critical editors.

**5. Now**—resuming the description of the true widow which was broken off by verse 4. **She that is a widow indeed and desolate**—one who has no kindred on whom she can depend and is thus left in desolation. **Trusteth in God**—or, *Has fixed her hope on God*; her desolate condition, without earthly supporters, impels her to set, and continue to keep, her hope on God. (Jer. 49:11.) “It is the duty and comfort of those who are desolate. *Therefore* God sometimes brings his people into such straits that they have nothing else to trust to,

6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,

6 day. But she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead 7 while she liveth. These things also command, that 8 they may be without reproach. But if any provide not for his own, and specially his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an 9 unbeliever. Let none be enrolled as a widow under

that they may with more confidence trust in him." (Henry.) **And continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.** The Greek words have the article, *the supplications and the prayers*, and the reference may be to stated attendance on the public prayers of the church, for which her freedom from domestic cares would give opportunity, and to which her desolation might naturally prompt. 'Night and day,' however, suggests rather the translation, *her supplications and her prayers*, the article designating these as the natural and well-known duties of Christians, to which she in a special manner would give herself. Of the two words, the former signifies *petitions*, the latter *acts of worship*; here, probably, there is no emphasis on the distinction. Possibly the case of Anna was before the apostle's mind. (Luke 2:36, 37; 18:7; 1 Cor. 7:32.)

**6. But**—in contrast with the case of the true widow. **She that liveth in pleasure—lives in luxury, voluptuously, wantonly** (James 5:5); one who lives indulging the bodily appetites and the mere pleasures of sense. Ellicott thinks the word also "points to prodigality, wastefulness." **Is dead while she lives**—her frivolous, selfish, sensual existence is not true life; it fulfills none of life's true ends, and, as to any real value to herself or to others, she is practically dead. (Matt. 8:22; Eph. 5:14; Rev. 3:1.) "Though she seems to live this life of the senses, she is dead according to the Spirit." (Theophylact.) "While alive in the flesh, she has no real life in the Spirit." (Alford.)

**7. And these things give in charge**—the things concerning widows, ver. 3-6. **That they may be blameless.** The end had in view, namely—that the church be not exposed to reproach, as they would be, either by improper conduct in the widows themselves, or by unnatural neglect of widows on the part of those bound to care for them.

**8. But if any provide not for his own.** A general precept, requiring all to make provision for those naturally dependent on them, but here given as emphasizing the duty of

children to provide for a widowed mother, or grandmother. The word 'provide' signifies to take care for beforehand, to foresee and prepare for coming need. (Rom. 12:17; 2 Cor. 8:21.) **And specially for those of his own house**—his own kindred, those naturally dependent on him, as rightful members of his family. This, though it certainly suggests provision for one's family (2 Cor. 12:14), does not authorize the hoarding of wealth for them, a sin for which this passage is often cited in justification. But here the emphasis is not placed on the duty of parents to provide for the future wealth of their children, but on the duty of children to provide for the present needs of their parents. Against such hoarding for children Scripture gives frequent and solemn warning. (Ps. 39:6; Eccl. 2:18, 19, Luke 12:20.)

**He hath denied the faith**—has repudiated the gospel as a rule of life, in that, by failing to provide for those dependent on him, he is untrue to its teachings and spirit, and has thus practically renounced the faith. "Where love does not exist nor work, there neither does faith exist nor work; so that he who does not fulfill the offices of love toward his kindred, is virtually an unbeliever." (Macknight.) **And is worse than an infidel** (*unbeliever*). Shows himself inferior in this virtue even to the heathen. Cicero taught: "Every man ought to take care of his own family"; and this was the common doctrine of the heathen moralists. Christ teaches that the Christian should be in every virtue superior to the heathen. (Matt. 5:46, 47.)

**II. 9, 10. QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED IN WIDOWS SUPPORTED BY THE CHURCH.**—They must (1) have attained sixty years of age; (2) have sustained honorable marital relations; (3) have made a good reputation for the domestic virtues and for works of benevolence.

**9. Let not a widow be taken into the number** (*enrolled*) **under threescore years old.** This did not preclude aid to widows who were younger and were in need; but it was to

10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

threescore years old, *having been* the wife of one man, 10 well reported of for good works; if she hath brought up children, if she hath used hospitality to strangers, if she hath washed the saints' feet, if she hath relieved the afflicted, if she hath diligently followed

be presumed that, as a rule, those under sixty would be capable of self-support, or would need only occasional aid. Hence the rule that only such as had reached the age of sixty should be placed among those whose full support the church assumed. **Having been the wife of one man**—that is, one who had lived chastely in the marriage relation. It has no reference to the number of times she had been married, but refers solely to fidelity to the marriage vow. Only women who had led virtuous lives were to be received. That the apostle does not intend to place a stigma on remarriage, and make it a bar to reception into the number of widows supported by the church, is evident from the following considerations: 1. He expressly directs; in verse 14, that the younger widows remarry, and affirms, in Rom. 7: 1-3; 1 Cor. 7: 8, 9, 39, the rightfulness of remarriage. 2. There is no adequate evidence of a public sentiment against remarriage in the apostolic age; this feeling arose at a later period, as a natural outgrowth of the false asceticism, whose beginnings the apostle deprecates in this Epistle. 3. Even were it shown that such a sentiment existed at that time, it is wholly unlikely that the apostle would foster it, even by a temporary concession; for such a feeling is in its nature wholly false, and is subversive of a fundamental human right. 4. The language here does not require the reference to remarriage after death of a husband; for, in the frequency of divorce, and the general laxity of morals (a laxity inconceivable in our Christian civilization), it was not an unusual fact that several living men had stood in the relation of husband to the same woman, or that the woman, before her conversion, had been notoriously unfaithful to the marriage vow. The language here would perfectly apply to either of these cases. (Matt. 14: 3, 4; 1 Cor. 5: 1.) Such a view is utterly foreign to the spirit and doctrine of Paul, who specially warns Timothy against such an ascetic tendency (4: 3), and declares that "marriage is honourable in all." (Heb. 13: 14.) Compare, for more full discussion, notes on ch. 3: 2. The widow therefore whose former marriage relations had been discreditable was not to be

received to bring discredit on those supported by the church.

**10. Well reported of for good works**—that is, for good works done in her former married life. She must have a good reputation as one who had worthily performed the duties of life. The 'good works' here are not mentioned as duties for which she must be qualified, as if they belonged to an office to which she was now to be set apart; for of this there is no intimation. But they are good works which in her married life she faithfully performed, and which therefore show her to be worthy of this provision for her destitute and widowed old age. Hence he names the prominent virtues of a Christian matron, the head of a household; and if in her married and prosperous days these virtues have been shown in her, this was to be received as evidence of her worthiness to be enrolled among the widows. Examples of the good works referred to are now specifically cited. **If she have brought up children**—well, successfully brought them up, her own or others'. **If she have lodged strangers**—was hospitable to strangers, a duty constantly insisted on in the New Testament. (3: 2; Rom. 12: 13; Heb. 13: 2.) **If she have washed the saints' feet**. If her home had been freely open to Christians, who in that age specially needed hospitality, and her heart had prompted her to perform for them, as Christ's servants, the most humble services, such even as the hospitable duty of washing their feet. In hot countries, where only sandals are worn, this is necessary to hospitality, but it is usually done by servants. (Gen. 18: 4; 19: 2; Luke 7: 41; John 13: 14.) **If she have relieved the afflicted**—was thoughtful and helpful to the poor, the sick, the sorrowing, and the friendless. **If she have diligently followed every good work**—if her life was marked by kindness, benevolence, and by interest and effort for truth and righteousness. The apostle depicts, with marvelous skill, the traits of a true Christian matron, and enjoins that only such as have shown them shall be admitted to the privileged position of widows supported by the church. This beneficent provision thus

11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;

12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

11 every good work. But younger widows refuse: for when they have waxed wanton against Christ, they 12 desire to marry; having condemnation, because

served to deter from a vicious and selfish life, by being restricted to those who had been virtuous and benevolent; and the history of church charities abundantly justifies the wisdom of such a restriction. "Particular care ought to be taken to relieve those, when they fall into decay, who, when they had wherewithal, were ready to every good work." (Henry.)

**III. 11-16. WIDOWS UNDER SIXTY YEARS OF AGE ARE NOT TO BE ENROLLED AMONG THOSE SUSTAINED BY THE CHURCH.**—1. Reasons for excluding such from the list: (a) Their liability to fall under the influence of wanton desire, seeking remarriage, and thus to come under condemnation, by indulging a frivolous, earthly, sensual disposition, inconsistent with their original faith in Christ. (b) Their danger, if thus relieved by the church of the necessity of self-support, of becoming idle gossipers and tattlers, and in this way injurious to themselves and others. (11-13.) 2. It is the apostle's will, therefore, that the younger widows marry, and assume the duties belonging to heads of families; and the recommendation to this finds emphasis in the fact, that some younger widows, who had been placed on the widow's list, had already become an occasion of scandal, having yielded to temptation. (14, 15.) 3. If, however, they do not remarry, their Christian relations or friends, should they have such, ought to assume their support; that the church be not burdened, but have means to support those whose age and desolation make them widows indeed. (16.)

**11. But the younger widows refuse**—decline to put widows less than sixty years old on the list of those supported by the church. **For when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ**—*waxed wanton*; "incited by sensual desire." (Grimm.) 'Against Christ'; indulging in such wanton desires, they are in spirit and conduct in opposition to Christ. It is "to surrender oneself to a carnal and luxurious course of life, as antagonistic to the claims and calling of Christ." (Fairbairn.) **They will marry**—rather, as Revised Version, *desire to marry*; yielding thus to

wanton desire, they will seek a remarriage. This will become in them a dominant passion and purpose, coloring and directing their spirit and life. Their sin was not in their remarriage, to which, indeed, the apostle here counsels them, but in the wanton desire for it, which led to a condition of mind and a course of conduct such as involves the loss of that faith which they had at their conversion.

**12. Having damnation** (*condemnation*)—from God; not necessarily, however, eternal condemnation, but as erring children falling under his displeasure and consequent chastisement. Perhaps, also, the condemnation is not to be excluded which their conduct called forth from others, and even from their own consciences. **Because they have cast off their first faith.** In yielding to such an earthly, sensual disposition, they showed that in heart they had fallen away from their original faith in Christ. "The writer 'by faith' understands the inner faith-relation to Christ, the real faith-life, which to him is always essentially conditioned on a good conscience and a fulfilling of moral duty. So now here: these wanton, husband-seeking widows came into a condition in which . . . they lay on themselves condemnation." (Beck.) 'First faith' here does not, as some suppose, signify a formal promise of perpetual widowhood, made on being enrolled among the widows; for of such a promise there is no trace in Scripture, and it is in itself wholly foreign to the spirit of the gospel. This vow, like the office of presbyteress with which it was connected, is not found in the Christian Church until more than a century after this Epistle was written, a period when the asceticism which the apostle here deprecates had triumphed in the church. It was easy for Tertullian, and the Fathers who followed him, to find here a vow of widowhood, because in their age celibacy had come to be regarded as superior to marriage; but surely a sober and reverent exegesis should reject so false a principle of interpretation which imputes the perverted ideas of that far later period to the simple, pure words of God. The Most High nowhere puts dishonor on marriage, that first and holiest institution he established

13 And withal they learn *to be idle*, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

1 Gr. *faith* ..... 2 Or, *women*.

13 they have rejected their first <sup>1</sup>pledge. And withal they learn also *to be idle*, going about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busy-  
14 bodies, speaking things which they ought not. I desire therefore that the younger <sup>2</sup>*widows* marry, bear children, rule the household, give none

on earth; and all attempts of man to set aside or to lower and degrade this primal ordinance of heaven have perpetually tended, not to holiness, but to the degradation of woman and the diffusion of immorality through society. The interpretation here of such a vow, while thus doubtful as resting on a palpable anachronism and as adverse to the spirit of the gospel, is also inconsistent with the language and context. For 1. ‘Faith’ (*πίστις*) is used to express *a vow or promise* only in rare and exceptional cases, where the context clearly indicates the departure from the usual sense. 2. No intimation is given, by transitional word or otherwise, that the apostle, at verse 9, changes his subject from the temporal support of widows to their induction into a church office; on the contrary, verse 16, which clearly relates to the temporal support of widows, shows that the subject remains unchanged through the whole passage, from verse 3 to verse 16. The plain meaning is, therefore, that in giving themselves up to a frivolous, earthly, sensual disposition and habit, they destroyed the simplicity and purity of that faith in Christ which they had professed in baptism, and from which issues a life dedicated to God. “If this faith referred to a promise not to remarry, it could not be called their ‘first faith.’” (Whitby.) Thus Calvin, Bengel, Fairbairn.

13. **And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house**—a further reason why widows under sixty should not be taken into the number supported by the church; for, thus freed from the necessity of self-support, they fall into idleness, with all the evil dispositions and habits it engenders. The apostle uses the present tense because he is speaking of an evil which must naturally result from such a cause and which was already apparent. (ver. 15.) The facts, therefore, justified this restriction as to age; for the younger widows, thereby left to their own resources, would be impelled to honorable industry and be preserved from

the dangers always consequent on idleness. **And not only idle, but tattlers also—loose, or trifling talkers, tale-bearers. And busybodies**—meddling in matters that do not concern them, mischief-makers. **Speaking things which they ought not.** The common results of idleness: it makes gossips, tale-bearers, meddlers in other people’s matters. The inspired pen has here drawn the true picture of many an idle and worse than wasted life, degrading, bemiring itself in the filthy slime of social gossip and scandal, instead of ennobling and elevating itself in the service of Christ. The remedy for this, as here indicated, is in devolving on them as far as possible the duty of self-support, and in encouraging them to re-enter the married state, as opening to them their natural sphere of development and usefulness.

14. **I will, therefore, that the younger women marry.** ‘Women,’ supplied in the Common Version, is not found in the Greek; and as widows here form the subject of the context, it is plainly of them the apostle speaks. In view of the ill results which have followed, and which, in the nature of the case, will be likely to follow the reception of the younger widows among those supported by the church, *therefore* he gives it as his apostolic counsel and desire that they remarry, because this would place them in normal and safe relations. **Bear children, guide the house.** Thus placed in the varied duties of the home life, as presiding over a family, they would be preserved from temptation and would be likely to honor the Christian profession. **Give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully**, ‘adversary,’ probably here referring to the Jew or Gentile opposer of the gospel, who was ever seeking occasion for reproach of it in the failings and misconduct of those who professed it. (Titus 2:8.) “He who is of the contrary part.” (Phil. 1:28.) Here, as elsewhere, the apostle presents home life as woman’s best refuge from social dangers, and as the true nursery of the purest and noblest womanly

15 For some are already turned aside after Satan.

16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

virtues; and that asceticism which forbids or depreciates marriage he regards as the prolific fountain of social degradation and wrong. All history has confirmed this teaching of Holy Writ; the virtue, and consequently the strength and welfare, of any people is in its homes. The destruction of family life has always wrought social demoralization and national ruin. The only occasion when Paul discouraged marriage was in the presence of impending persecution, when he counseled temporary abstinence as "good for the present distress," but even then accorded perfect freedom to each to act in the matter as his own convictions might dictate. (1 Cor. 7:7, 8, 26, 32-34.).

**15. For some are already turned aside after Satan.** Referring doubtless to well-known cases at Ephesus, where young widows, after being enrolled among those supported by the church, had shown these tendencies to evil, and had thus given occasion for reproach. This fact he presents, not merely as a warning to others, but as a reason for the restriction, apparently now first made, as to age in the reception of widows, and for the direction that the younger, instead of relying on church support, should remarry.

**16. If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them.** An extension of the duty enjoined in verses 4, 8, requiring the relief of widows more distantly related than mother or grandmother. Probably also the special reference is, as the context suggests, to those among the younger widows who for any cause did not remarry, and who, if they had children, might not be able to derive support from them in consequence of their yet tender age. To such a widowed relative, though more distantly related, as sister or cousin, aunt or niece, it is the duty of Christian kindred or friends to supply needed relief. **And let not the church be burdened, that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.** Relieved of the burden of supporting these younger widows and such as had relatives, the church could reserve its means for the support of those who, being without kindred, and of an age incapable of self-support, are, in a true and absolute sense,

15 occasion to the adversary for reviling: for already 16 some are turned aside after Satan. If any woman that believeth hath widows, let her relieve them, and let not the church be burdened; that it may relieve them who are widows indeed.

widows. Most of the oldest manuscripts, as the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, and Ephraim, with some verses, read: *If any woman that believeth.* The words, prefixed in the Common Version, 'man or,' were probably added in later manuscripts as a correction, because the mention of woman only seemed singular. But the apostle is here speaking specially of woman's duty, and would perhaps naturally speak of the female, rather than the male, head of the family, because she also would be most nearly affected by the addition of such widows to the family.

The fundamental conceptions of church charity unfolded in this passage have been justified by all experience in eleemosynary work. Indiscriminate charity has always proved a serious evil. In the beneficiaries, it has fostered indolence and pauperism, with all the vices that attend them; while in the benefactors, it has constantly tended, from the palpable evils resulting, to dry up the fountain of beneficence. Hence the divine wisdom of the method here prescribed. 1. The charity is to be bestowed in such spirit and manner as not to degrade, but to elevate and benefit the needy. 'Honor widows,' as recognizing their relation to Christ, and the relief bestowed as bestowed on Christ, who is represented in them, as suffering members of his body. (Matt. 25:40.) All almsgiving should be done as unto Christ, and in such manner as to preserve and develop a genuine self-respect in the recipient. 2. The church should assume the full support only, (a) when age and desolation exist such as preclude self-support and relief from kindred; and (b) when the previous character and life have been such that the recipient is a fitting ward of the church, and will not bring dishonor on the bounty bestowed. The church will, indeed, show kindness, as far as in her power, to all needy ones, and even to the unworthy; but, as regards widows, she is not to assume the *full* support, and thus make wards, of any except such as present these conditions. This restriction of honorable support to the aged who also had previously borne an honorable character, would serve at once to stimulate the charitable

17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

contribution of the church for this object, by the assurance that it was well bestowed, and to make the provision an encouragement, not to improvident and unworthy living, but to the prudent and virtuous conduct of life. In the possible event of a bereft and helpless old age, every true wife and mother had the hope that in the bosom of the church she would find an honorable refuge from want; while yet the church, in offering to her such a prospect, did not encourage idle and vicious living, by opening an asylum for the improvident and undeserving. 3. Christian charity should find its outlet, not so much through public, organized church work, as through individual, private acts of kindness. Hence the apostle throughout this passage seeks to develop to the utmost private beneficence in the relief of the needy, and to reduce within the smallest possible limit the sphere of public, formal church support. (Ver. 4, 8, 10, 16.) For, as it respects both the benefactor and the recipient, personal rather than official beneficence is that which confers the richest and most ennobling blessings.

**17-25. DIRECTIONS RESPECTING THE COMPENSATION, DISCIPLINE, AND SELECTION OF ELDERS.**—1. Elders who excel in the pastoral office, especially those who give themselves to preaching and instruction, are entitled to liberal compensation, as is shown from both Scripture and reason. (17, 18.) 2. Discipline should be instituted against an elder only when the charge is supported by the testimony of two or three witnesses; but those who are convicted as living in sin should be rebuked before the whole church, that the rest may fear to sin. (19, 20.) 3. In dealing with the elders, Timothy is solemnly charged, as in the sight of God and Christ and all holy beings, to observe these instructions, acting without prejudice or partiality; as also to avoid rashness in setting men apart to the eldership, since, otherwise, by his neglect to ascertain their character, he would become a virtual sharer in their sins, if they proved unworthy. (21, 22.) 4. As men are differently constituted, some revealing plainly and at once their real character, while others conceal it, he is urged to use caution and patience in forming his judgment of men, but

17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the

is encouraged also by the assurance that the real character, however concealed, will sooner or later be fully manifested. (24, 25.)

**17. Let the elders that rule well**—that is, those who are distinguished for success in presiding over the church and its interests; men who show marked ability in developing, organizing, and guiding the activities of the church, and in the care and help of souls. **Be counted worthy of double honour**—rather, of double consideration, involving here, as in ver. 3, a consideration or regard which finds expression in pecuniary reward. Observe: they are not to receive double compensation as a mere gratuity, but are to “be counted worthy” of it. It is their due, and is to be paid, therefore, as a just debt. Thus always in the Bible: the payment of God’s ministers is never made a gratuity, but always a matter of obligation. **Especially they who labour in the word and doctrine, or, in preaching and instruction.** This does not imply, as some have supposed, two distinct orders of elders, one order only ruling, and the other both ruling and preaching; for, according to uniform New Testament testimony, the double function of ruling and preaching belonged to *all* presbyters. For 1. The qualifications for both these duties were required for admission to the office (3:2, 4, 5; Titus 1:9); none could enter, unless both “apt to teach” and qualified “to take care of the church of God.” 2. Teaching is everywhere found combined with ruling in the functions of the elder. Paul, in addressing the elders of Ephesus, proposes to them his own work, both in spiritual oversight and in public and private teaching, as an example, illustrating and enforcing their duties. (Acts 20: 20, 21, 28, 31, 35.) Thus elsewhere: “Remember them that *have the rule over you*, who *have spoken unto you the word of God.*” (Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Thess. 5:12.) With these plain statements this passage is in full accord: it furnishes no evidence of a class of ruling elders, distinct from those who preached. The simple and natural interpretation is this: The apostolic churches, certainly the larger ones like that at Ephesus, had a plurality of elders; but all of these, though of equal authority and like function, did not possess in an equal degree the same

18 For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his reward.

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

gifts. While one was eminent in the pastoral care, another excelled in preaching; and still another was distinguished in both these departments, and, thus specially gifted, devoted his whole time to the office. It is of this class Paul here speaks—those who not only rule well, but also excel in public instruction, and who consequently devote themselves wholly to the work. These, he says, should receive, not the ordinary compensation given to elders, but a double or larger compensation, proportioned to the greater time and labor given to the office.

**18. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn**—or, *while treading out the grain*. The quotation, taken from Deut. 25:4, and introduced by 'for,' is designed to enforce, as a duty, the honorable support of those who give themselves wholly to the ministry. In Palestine, then as now, threshing was ordinarily done by oxen, which were driven over the sheaves, opened and spread on the threshing-floor, to separate the grain from the straw, either simply by treading it with their feet or also by bruising it with a heavy threshing-wain drawn after them. (Hosea 10:11.) The farmer sometimes begrudged the poor animals the occasional mouthfuls of straw and grain snatched while treading, and therefore muzzled the oxen. This God forbade—a prohibition, which, while applying literally to oxen, the apostle declares (1 Cor. 9:9) was intended to teach, reasoning from the less to the greater, the duty of a generous regard for all who serve us, especially for the ministers of the gospel. If God would have men tenderly regard the needs of oxen, while preparing grain for the earthly garner, much more would he have the church care tenderly for the needs of the ministry, who, toiling in God's spiritual harvest, are preparing souls, as grain of priceless value, for the garner in heaven. The duty of a generous support of the ministry is enforced by Christ himself. (Matt. 10:9, 10; Luke 10:7); and our apostle elsewhere, with great earnestness, pressess it on the consciences

18 word and in teaching. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his hire. Against an elder receive not an accusation, except at the mouth of two or three witnesses. 20 Them that sin reprove in the sight of all, that the

of the people. (1 Cor. 9:11-14; Gal. 6:6; 1 Thess. 5:12, 13.) **And, The labourer is worthy of his reward**—probably not intended as a quotation, but language used by the apostle as a common maxim, as indeed it is also used, for a like purpose, by Christ. (Matt. 10:10; Luke 10:7.) It is not improbable that the apostle knew of its use by Christ; but had he intended to quote it as "Scripture," but would have named Christ as authority. Thus Calvin, Huther, Wiesinger, Alford. Some, however, insist on its quotation from the gospels, and cite 2 Peter 3:16, as proof that the books of the New Testament were already regarded as a part of "Scripture." Thus all the ancient interpreters, and among the later, Macknight, Scott, Wordsworth, Fausset, and others.

**19. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses**—or, *upon the testimony or authority of two or three witnesses*. The meaning is, not that an elder should not be convicted except on such testimony,—for in all cases the Hebrew law required two or three witnesses to convict (Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:16), though a citation for trial might be made on a charge brought by one witness,—but that an accusation should not be entertained, judicial proceedings should not be instituted, unless two or three responsible parties attested the charge. This is required, as a special precaution, in the case of the elder, both because his position creates a presumption in his favor, and because, as a minister, he is peculiarly exposed to malice, and his reputation and influence might be seriously injured by the entertaining of a charge, though on the trial he was acquitted. The influence of even the best minister might be destroyed, if idle gossip and social tattling were accounted a sufficient ground for serious charges and judicial proceedings.

**20. Them that sin**—or, *are sinning*—that is, are convicted as living in sin. It refers not to such as are "overtaken in a fault" (Gal. 6:1), but to those with whom some form of sin has

21 I charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

21 rest also may be in fear. I charge *thee* in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without <sup>1</sup>prejudice, doing 22 nothing by partiality. Lay hands hastily on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep

1 Or, preference.

become habitual. This direction, as the context suggests, relates to the case of elders who are convicted as living in sin; and the restriction to these is necessary, if we accept, with some, the reading, *but them that sin*, which is found in some old manuscripts. It is, however, given in a general form, and the direction really applies to all who publicly sin. **Rebuke before all**—before the whole church. The public position of the offenders made their sin public, and there was, therefore, the more danger of its infecting others. A public rebuke in such case would at once vindicate the church from complicity with the sin, and deter others from falling into it. This injunction does not conflict with that in ver. 1: for there the apostle is speaking of personal, private rebuke, while here he speaks of a formal church censure, after due public conviction, and which therefore would be administered as from the church. **That others also may fear**—that is, the rest of the church. Compare 2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:10-13. The public rebuke would tend to deter others from falling into the sin thus solemnly reprobated.

**21. I charge thee before God**—not an adjuration, but a solemn charge, given as in full view of God and Christ and holy angels, who are conceived as witnessing and joining in it. The apostle, in giving the charge, and Timothy in fulfilling it, are under the direct gaze of the spiritual world. Compare 1 Thess. 4:6; 2 Tim. 2:14; 4:1. Others interpret of the future judgment, when the whole spiritual universe will be present, and each human life will be revealed in that solemn and glorious Presence. **And the Lord Jesus Christ**—the word 'Lord' is not in the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, Claromontanus, and other old manuscripts, and is wanting in many ancient versions and Fathers. **And the elect angels**—referring to the holy angels, as distinguished from the "angels which kept not their first estate." 'Elect' designates them as the special objects of God's love, and the chosen ministers of his will. It is as in the presence of God and Christ and all holy intelligences in

the universe, the apostle lays this charge on his assistant, requiring him to act in the affairs of the church, and especially in those relating to the ministry, as in full view of this august, but invisible Presence. The interest and participation of angels in the events of this world, especially in the work of redemption, are seen in Matt. 18:10; Luke 15:10; 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 1:14; 12:22. **That thou observe these things**—referring to the things enjoined. (Ver. 19, 20.) **Without preferring one before another**—or, *without prejudice or pre-judgment*. He is not to prejudge any case, but to bring to the investigation a calm, unbiased, judicial mind, prepared to weigh fairly the evidence, and to decide strictly according to truth. **Doing nothing by partiality**—not only is he to avoid an intellectual pre-judgment, but he is to act with impartial heart, without bias of feeling, allowing neither affection nor aversion to influence his decision for one against another. The consciousness of the presence and gaze of the heavenly world would lift him above passion and prejudice, and fit him to act with caution and impartiality in the discipline of the church, and especially of the ministry.

**22. Lay hands suddenly (hastily) on no man**—that is, without due inquiry and deliberation. Some refer this to an imposition of hands customary on the readmission of excluded persons to the church; they regard this verse, therefore, as a caution against the hasty and inconsiderate restoration of such to church fellowship. Such a custom, without doubt, existed in the third century, as it is mentioned by Cyprian; but as it is nowhere alluded to in Scripture, as Paul uses "the laying on of hands" in these Epistles only of ordination (4:14; 2 Tim. 1:7), and as the Fathers nearest to the apostolic age so interpret it, the phrase should probably be understood here of ordination to the ministry. The hasty admission of men to the ministry would be likely to result in ministerial irregularities and offenses; the caution, therefore, against hasty ordination is here naturally connected with the subject of

23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

24 Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before judgment; and some men they follow after.

ministerial discipline. Thus all the older interpreters, with Grotius, Macknight, Van Oosterzee, Alford, Fairbairn, and others, among the modern. (3:6.) **Neither be partaker of other men's sins**—as he would be, if, through want of due consideration in setting apart ministers, he should appoint the unworthy, and thereby scandal come on the church. Even Christ, when choosing the twelve apostles, decided on the persons to be set apart only after most of them had been with him for at least a year, and then only after a night spent in prayer. (Luke 6:12-16.) Paul and Barnabas, in their first mission, though they made many converts on their outward journey, did not ordain elders until they returned homeward, when there had been time to test the character of the converts, and a wise judgment was possible in making selection for official and responsible station. (Acts 14:21-23.) This caution in appointing to the sacred office, which appears so conspicuously in Scripture, should be sacredly observed; for the church and the presbytery which neglect it become sharers in the sins of those whom they thus recklessly place in positions of trust and authority. **Keep thyself pure**—literally, *thyself keep pure*, that thou mayest be fitted to rebuke sin in others. 'Pure,' not merely *chaste*, but, in reference to the whole outward life, *blameless, holy*. (2 Cor. 7:11; Phil. 4:8; 1 John 3:3.) Present in thyself an example of purity, so as to be prepared to demand a like purity in those who would enter the sacred office. "While thou hast to act as judge upon other men, be morally pure thyself." (Ellicott.)

**23. Drink no longer water, but use a little wine**—literally, *Be no longer a water drinker*; that is, one who makes water his exclusive drink. It seems that Timothy was a total abstainer from wine. The reason of this is not stated, but probably he abstained as an example, to deter others from the use of strong drink, which then, as now, was a prevailing and destructive vice. Some suppose that an ascetic tendency restrained him; but the apostle bases his advice to 'use a little wine,' not on this ground, but solely on the needs of his health—a reason in itself ade-

quate, and beyond which we need not pass. **For thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities**—or, *oft-recurring ailments*. A little wine, in the apostle's judgment, was required as a medicine. Timothy was afflicted with bodily weakness, often recurring, and doubtless hindering his work; and Paul suggests wine as the remedy. "These frequent infirmities perhaps explain the timidity of Timothy's character." (Farrar.) This morbid timidity might impair the vigor and firmness so essential in the administration of discipline, especially in the discipline of presbyters; and hence this direction in regard to care in giving increased tone to his bodily health. Thus Alford. Two suggestions may here be made: 1. It is the duty of ministers to exercise due care for their health; there is neither wisdom nor piety in neglecting means to secure and retain that bodily vigor on which usefulness must so largely depend. "God wills that people should take all due care of their bodies. As we are not to make them our masters, so neither our slaves; but to use them so as they may be most fit and helpful to us in the service of God." (Henry.) 2. No inference can be drawn from this passage for the use of wine as a beverage; it is here advised solely as a medicine, in view of oft-recurring bodily ailments. Indeed, the fact that Timothy was himself an abstainer, and that the apostle only advises wine as a remedial agent, suggests that Paul did not favor its use as a beverage. Plainly, no one can rightfully plead the sanction of Paul for the use of wine, unless he has the bodily ailments for which alone Timothy was advised to use it.

**24. Some men's sins are open beforehand**—requiring no difficult investigation to discover and expose them. **Going before to judgment**. They are "crying sins"; plain, open violations of God's laws, thus 'going before,' or anticipating judgment. **And some men they follow after**. Their sins being concealed, stand revealed only after investigation, or by their results. Such men, under a fair exterior have a rotten character; and only careful inquiry, or the developments of time and providence, will reveal it. Thus

25 Likewise also the good works of *some* are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

25 they follow after. In like manner also <sup>1</sup> there are good works that are evident; and such as are otherwise cannot be hid.

## CHAPTER VI.

LET as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and *his* doctrine be not blasphemed.

1 Let as many as are <sup>2</sup>servants under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and the doctrine be not blasphemed.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *the works that are good are evident*. . . . . <sup>2</sup> Gr. *bondservants*.

their sins do not precede, but rather follow trial or judgment.

**25. Likewise also.** This difference in the manifestation of character in the wicked is also seen in the righteous. **The good works of some are manifest beforehand** —they stand out before the eyes of all, revealing at once and distinctly the true character of those who perform them. **And they that are otherwise cannot be hid**—that is, the good works that are not now openly manifest cannot be hid. The good works of others are less openly manifest, rendering it more difficult to decide as to their character; but even in these cases their righteousness will sooner or later be revealed. It is an eternal law that character, whether good or bad, tends to reveal itself, and will in the end stand forth distinctly apparent. “There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known.” (Matt. 10:26.) The design of verses 24 and 25 is at once to encourage and to caution Timothy in reference to the judgment of character necessary in setting apart men for the ministry, and in the disciplinary work of the church. The task was difficult, requiring great caution and discrimination, because men are so differently constituted as to the manifestation of character. Hence, he should exercise patience, forming no hasty judgment, contenting himself with no partial, imperfect investigation; and should proceed in ordination or discipline only after thorough examination and trial, assured that patient investigation and the testing of time will at last develop the real character, however concealed.

**Ch. 6:1, 2. DUTIES OF CHRISTIAN SLAVES TO THEIR MASTERS.—1.** If the masters are unbelievers, they are to render to them all due honor, averting the reproach to God and his gospel which the opposite course would occasion. 2. If the masters are believers,

Christian slaves are not to despise their authority as masters, because they are brethren in Christ; but all the more to render them service, because those who receive the benefit of the service are believing and beloved.

**1. Let as many servants as are under the yoke.** The word here translated ‘servant’ (*δοῦλος*), signifies: 1. A *slave*, one held in involuntary servitude. Thus 1 Cor. 7:21; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11; Rev. 6:15, in all which the bond-servant is contrasted with the free man. Possibly also, as in Matt. 18:23-26, it sometimes designates servants in general. 2. A *servant*, or one who voluntarily submits his will and capacity to the sway of another. Thus, “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin” (John 8:34); and “servants of sin,” “servants of righteousness.” (Rom. 6:16-22.) In this sense, as self-devoted, without reserve, to God, Christians are called “the servants (*δοῦλοι*) of God.” (1 Peter 2:16.) 3. A *servant*, as one who is not only devoted absolutely to God, but who is also set apart by him for a special service. Thus Paul is “a servant of God” (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1), and the other apostles (James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 1); so also Moses (Rev. 15:3), and even Christ (Phil. 2:7). In these cases involuntariness is excluded from the conception, and the word designates one who yields himself, in the voluntary self-devotion of all the faculties of his being, to the will and service of God. Here the words “under the yoke” show that the term is used in the first sense —*slaves*, bondmen, in a state of involuntary servitude. **Count their own masters worthy of all honour.** The Christian slave was not to suppose that, because of his exalted heavenly calling, he was released from the duties of his earthly station; rather, his profession as a Christian should lead him to still higher fidelity to them, so that his master, though unbelieving, would be compelled, by his cheerful and faithful service, to acknowledge the excellence of his religion instead of

2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but let them serve them the rather, because they that <sup>1</sup> partake of the benefit are believing and beloved. These things teach and exhort.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *lay hold of.*

blaspheming the Christian's God and the gospel. (Titus 2:9, 10.) **That the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.** It was charged against Israel, "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." (Rom. 2:24.) The avoidance of all occasion of reproach on the part of unbelievers is specially enjoined on Christians. (Titus 2:5, 10.)

Slavery formed a prominent feature in the ancient world. In the classic period, Athens is said to have had twenty thousand free men and four hundred thousand slaves. Gibbon estimates that in the apostolic age the slave population in the Roman Empire equaled that of the free, an estimate which, though usually regarded as too low, makes the number of slaves at least sixty millions. Acquired, originally, either from captives taken in war or from slave dealers, this vast multitude, forming half the empire, were held in perpetual servitude, and were bought and sold like cattle in the market. Servile insurrections were frequent, and were terrific in the passions they developed, and the devastation and blood that attended them. It was an ever-present, ghastly peril, a terrible force, which, like a pent-up volcano, momentarily threatened to break forth, and overwhelm in destruction the whole fabric of the Roman state and civilization. This gigantic social wrong Christianity met. It did not, however, propose an instant and violent disruption of the slave's bonds; for thus it could only have made itself a terror to society, as fomenting a socialistic revolution, and menacing the destruction of that social order on which the security of life and property depends. But it antagonized the evil, as Moses had done in the earlier Dispensation, not by formal enactment abolishing at once the civil relation, but by the inculcation of principles and the establishment of relations, such as must inevitably work its ultimate removal. It did not proclaim civil freedom to the slave, but it gave him a spiritual freedom, which ennobled and blessed even his servile condition. It taught him, "If thou mayest be free, use it rather"

—freedom is to be chosen rather than bondage; but if the yoke may not be broken, be not restive under it. Rather look on thy position as the post of duty divinely appointed for thee, and serve therein as doing service, not to man, but to God. It thus elevated the character and blessed the life of the slave, by exalting even his menial toil into a Christ-service, at once ennobling and divine; and the Christian, while in outward relation a bondman, was in spirit the Lord's free man. See 1 Cor. 7:20-24; Eph. 6:5-8; Col. 3:22; Titus 2:9; 1 Peter 2:18-21. On the other hand, the great doctrines, that God made all men of one blood, and, therefore, by nature equal in rights; that Christ "gave himself a ransom for all," and before him, therefore, all believers, as alike redeemed by his blood and made members of his body, are essentially equal, without distinction of bond or free; and that in the church, all—alike the slave and the free man—have an equal voice, and stand on the same footing: these primary, essential principles of the gospel, as they permeated Christian life, must destroy all arbitrary, oppressive social distinctions, and create a Christian civilization, in which all men would find equality before human law, as they had equality in the sight of God. Indeed, the express injunctions laid on Christian masters insured to the slave even then, if not an immediate legal emancipation, at least the essential advantages of freedom. (Eph. 6:9; Gal. 3:28; Col. 4:1.)

**2. And they that have believing masters—**Christian slaves whose masters are also Christians—**let them not despise them, because they are brethren**—an obvious danger. In the spiritual kingdom they were one in Christ Jesus, brethren invested with equal rights; and they might easily think that this destroyed the earthly relation of master and slave. But this new and higher spiritual relation, the apostle insists, though it must essentially influence, and modify the civil relation, did not dissolve it. Spiritual enfranchisement was not civil enfranchisement. In

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

3 If any man teacheth a different doctrine, and consenteth not to <sup>1</sup> sound words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *healthful*.

earthly station they were still master and slave; and he forbids that Christian slaves, taking advantage of their spiritual equality with their masters, should cease to honor and obey them in the civil relation. **But rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit**—or, *but all the more serve them, because they who partake of the benefit are believing and beloved*, or, because they who (in return for benefits conferred) receive the benefit (of the service) are believing and beloved. The word here translated *partakers* signifies to receive in return for something, as a reciprocal benefit. It implies that, while the masters received the benefit of the slaves' service, that was in fact only a reciprocation of benefit received by the slaves from the masters. The passage thus affords, perhaps, an inlook upon the relations of reciprocal kindness existing between masters and slaves in the apostolic churches. Here the apostle teaches that the Christian character and relations of the master, who shared the benefit of the slaves' service, instead of prompting to discontent and disobedience, should rather prompt to a more cheerful and hearty service. **These things teach and exhort**—the things relating to the honor and obedience due from slaves to their masters. It was the duty of Timothy to teach and guard the Christian slaves against the doctrine and spirit of servile insurrection, then so widely and disastrously threatening the foundations of society in the Roman world.

**3-5. THE EVIL CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE OF HIM WHO, OPPOSING THIS INSTRUCTION, TEACHES A DIFFERENT DOCTRINE.**—He is characterized: 1. As one who does not assent to the healthful words of Christ, and to the teaching which accords with godliness. (3.) 2. As one who is puffed up with self-conceit, though he has in fact no right apprehension of truth, but is morbidly eager for needless and hurtful disputation. (4.) 3. The controversies thus fomented by him excite only evil passions and continual animosities in such as are corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, who evince their corruption and error in that they

regard piety only as a means of earthly gain. (4, 5.)

**3. If any man teach otherwise**—that is, any other doctrine than that here taught, referring primarily to the instruction just given in regard to slaves; but, as the form of statement is general, it perhaps comprehends all teaching contrary to that of the apostle. Compare ch. 1:3-7. It seems probable that the false teachers referred to in this Epistle, among other perversions of the gospel, taught a false view of Christian freedom and social order, socialistic and anarchical doctrines, adapted to inflame the different classes of society against each other, and to excite a social revolution. They thus made Christianity a mere instrument for the reorganization of society, and the securing of political and social equality. It is evident that such teaching, while it wholly ignored the spiritual significance and value of the gospel, must be in the highest degree dangerous in a social condition where at least one-half the population were slaves. It could result only in revolution and anarchy. Hence, the frequency and urgency with which Paul inculcates on slaves the duty of obedience to their masters; while yet he nowhere affirms the rightfulness of the relation of master and slave, but everywhere teaches doctrines and establishes institutions which, with silent and potent force, must in the end work its destruction. **And consent not to wholesome words**—or, *does not accede to words morally healthful*, adapted to the health of the individual soul and of society. ‘Wholesome.’ Compare 1:10; 2 Tim. 1:13; 4:3. Titus 1:9, 13; 2:1, 2. The gospel, faithfully preached, tends to the moral health of a community, purifying, elevating, and ennobling men in every relation of life. It makes men better in the family, in society, in the state, and thus uplifts and blesses the life of mankind, promotes law and order, and diffuses intelligence and happiness. **Even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ.** These health-giving words are the words of Christ, who ever taught the patient endurance rather than the violent resistance of wrong. (Mat. 5:39-48.) Pos-

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

4 is according to godliness; he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, wranglings of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, supposing that god-

1 Gr. *sick.*

sibly the apostle refers to his own words as the words of Christ, since the gospel he preached was not received from man, "but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11, 12.) **And to the doctrine which is according to godliness**—doctrine that accords with and tends to godliness.

**4. He is proud** (*puffed up*)—literally, *enveloped in smoke*, besotted with self-conceit. (3:6.) "He is a vaporer, enveloped with self-conceit." (Beck.) "Commonly those are most proud who know least; for with all their knowledge, they do not know themselves." (Henry.) **Knowing nothing**—or, *although he understands nothing*, has no right apprehension of the gospel. (1:7.) **But doting about**—or, *is sick about*, *is morbidly eager for*—**questions and strifes of words**. Diseased in mind, he fails to apprehend the substantial truths of religion, and is morbidly contentious about questions of no real moment. His state is the reverse of that spiritual health which the *wholesome* words of the gospel bring. **Whereof cometh.** As before the apostle has shown the mentally diseased condition of these men, he now points out the results that flow from it. The questionings and word strifes fostered by this morbid spirit of contention inflame the worst passions and animosities among men—that is, among these false teachers and those who follow them. **Envy**—making the slave envious of the master, the poor of the rich, the afflicted and unfortunate of the prosperous, thus producing discontent and murmuring. **Strife**—envy naturally leads to discord in word and act. **Railings**—or, *evil speaking*, harsh and abusive language, a common result of disputes, especially when inspired by erroneous views. **Evil surmisings**—those harsh suspicions of each other's motives and intentions which arise when confidence and charity have been lost.

**5. Perverse disputings**—or, *lasting disputes, stubborn contentions*, the word as found in the best text signifying wranglings that are perpetual. **Of men of corrupt minds**

**and destitute of the truth**—rather, *corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth*; descriptive of the men to whom the preceding characteristics belong, as 'envy, strife, etc. *Mind* (*τὸν νοῦν*) includes here the intellect as well as the moral nature; the whole inner man, mental and spiritual, is corrupted. (Titus 1:15.) The word rendered *destitute* means, not barely without the truth, but bereft of the truth, either as for the time despoiled of the truth by Satanic temptation, or as permanently given over by God to judicial blindness, to "strong delusion that they should believe a lie." (2 Thess. 2:9-12.) Perverted in their inmost life, they had neither susceptibility to spiritual truth, nor power to apprehend it. **Supposing that gain is godliness**—rather, *that godliness is a means of gain*; "a way of advancing one's worldly interests" (Fausset); "a traffic for gain" (Wordsworth); "a gainful trade" (Conybeare). The proof that they are *bereft of the truth* is found in their false and debasing conception of godliness, or religion, as something to be used only for mere earthly welfare. Their unworthy thought of religion proved their destitution of it. (Acts 8:20.) They valued the gospel only as it secured worldly advantage in wealth and social distinction. Probably the apostle has in view: 1. Those socialistic agitators, who regarded the gospel simply as an instrument to reconstruct society, by rousing the animosities of the different classes against each other, and fomenting a social revolution, through which all oppressive distinctions should be destroyed by outward violence; and who, in thus viewing religion, utterly failed to apprehend, alike its spiritual nature and aims, and its method of blessing the outward condition of men by first elevating and ennobling the spiritual condition. 2. Those false religious professors, who use their position in the church as a means of worldly advantage, in promoting their business, their social position, or their political preferment. (1 Thess. 2:5; Titus 1:11.) In both cases such a debasing conception of the gospel proves them to be "men corrupted in mind

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.

6 liness is a way of gain. But godliness with contentment is great gain; for we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out; but having food and covering <sup>1</sup>we shall be therewith

1 Or, in these we shall have enough.

and bereft of the truth." **From such withdraw thyself.** These words are wanting in the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, and most other ancient manuscripts, as also in most of the versions; they should be rejected from the text, as not genuine.

**6-10. PIETY WITH CONTENTMENT IS GREAT GAIN.**—This is shown—1. From the reasonableness of contentment, in that (a) our entrance into the world with nothing was intended to remind us that we can carry nothing out of it, and that it is folly, therefore, to be anxious about earthly goods; (b) if we have food and covering, all our real needs are in fact met. (7, 8.) 2. From the evils of the love of money, in that (a) those who are eager for riches fall into temptation and sin, which end in their destruction; (b) the love of money is a root from which springs every form of evil, and, as the result of it, some have destroyed alike their faith and their happiness. (9, 10.)

**6. But**—though godliness is thus misconceived and perverted as a means of earthly gain, yet there is a sense in which it is, even in this life, great gain. **Godliness with contentment.** The word rendered 'contentment' signifies *self-sufficiency*, denoting the state of one who has within himself the means of satisfying all his desires, and is not dependent therefor on external conditions. It is rendered in 2 Cor. 9:8 "sufficiency." The adjective is found. (Phil. 4:11.) "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content"—or, *to have a sufficiency in myself*, to be independent of outward circumstances. This is not the proud independence of the stoic, but that elevation of soul above external earthly conditions which comes from a consciousness of God's presence and love, and all-sufficing providence. (Ps. 23:37:16-29; Prov. 14:14.)

**Is great gain.** Piety, when thus an all-sufficing power within the soul, is the highest means of gain. It brings the absolute riches, since it not only satisfies every conscious want, but also fills the soul with positive blessedness. It is an exhaustless fountain of blessing within, "a well of water, springing up into everlast-

ing life." See Heb. 13:5, 6. "The heart, amid every outward want, is then only truly rich, not merely when it feels no need of what it has not, but when it has that which exalts it above what it has not." (Wiesinger.) "In this concise and weighty sentence the apostle expresses both these main ideas, that godliness makes us content, and to be content is the highest good." (Van Oosterzee.)

**7. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out**—or, better, because, or, *seeing that*, neither can we carry anything out; a reason for contentment. God designed, by our coming into the world with nothing, to remind us that we can carry nothing out of it, and thus show us the folly of anxiety respecting merely earthly goods. The very manner of our birth is a dissuasion from the love of money, as it distinctly shows us that earthly wealth is a mere accident of our existence, a temporary possession, to be left behind when we die. "We are appointed by God to come naked into the world to teach us to remember that we must go naked out of it." (Alford.) "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." (Job 1:21; Eccl. 5:15; Ps. 49:16-20.) Only two of the ancient manuscripts, and these of minor importance, contain *it is evident* (*εὑρίσκων*), the most important omitting it. Probably it was added by some copyist to fill out his conception of the sense. Van Oosterzee, Huther, and others, however, retain it, regarding it as essential to the sense, and supposing that it may have been accidentally dropped out of the best codices.

**8. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.** Our real needs will with these be met. 'Food'—the word is a compound, and denotes *continual* or *sufficient* food. 'Raiment,' covering in general; it may possibly include the dwelling as well as the clothing. It is not barely an exhortation to be content, but a reason for contentment, since, if we have food and covering, we really have sufficient, and, therefore, should be content. These are our actual needs; and,

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

9 content. But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some reaching after have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

1 Gr. *evils.*

with these sufficed, we have enough. Compare Matt. 6:25; James 2:15, where human wants are also summed up in food and clothing.

**9. But they that will be rich**—or, *set their heart on being rich.* It designates, not the rich, but those who aspire after riches, who make this the object of life. “The wealthiest may be rich not in a bad sense; the poorest may covet to be so.” (Fausset.) (Ps. 6:10.)

**Fall into temptation**—are tempted to neglect the highest interests of the soul and the duties due to God, and to use improper means to obtain wealth. (Prov. 28:20, 22.) **And a snare**—or, *trap.* The eager desire of riches is a net in which they become entangled—a network of methods and relations in business in which the soul, as the fly in a spider’s web, is helplessly held. “The idea here is that they who have this desire become so *entangled* that they cannot easily escape. They become involved in the meshes of worldliness and sin; their movements are so fettered by cares, and inordinate desires, and by artificial wants, that they are no longer freemen.” (Barnes.)

**And into many foolish and hurtful lusts**—the passions naturally springing out of selfishness become regnant in them. They become envious, overreaching, avaricious, hard-hearted, unscrupulous as to truth and the rights of others. Such passions are ‘foolish,’ because unworthy of a reasonable and immortal being, and because, even when men thereby secure wealth, they do not obtain happiness. They are ‘hurtful,’ because they destroy all that is pure and noble in manhood, and insure at last the loss of the soul. **Which** (or, *such as*) **drown men in destruction and perdition.** Of the two words, the latter, by its usage, refers more directly to future punishment (Rom. 9:22; Phil. 1:28; Rev. 8:11), while the former may include also temporal destruction (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Thess. 5:3; 2 Thess. 1:9); but here they are probably not distinct in meaning, but cumulative for emphasis, equivalent to utter destruction. The image in the verb

is not properly of drowning, but of sinking—as of a ship foundering, which sinks and is submerged in the depths of the sea. These lusts wreck the soul, causing it to sink, with its priceless treasure, into the depths of perdition. “The love of money will, in all probability, prove the eternal overthrow of more characters among professing Christians than any other sin, because it is almost the only crime that can be indulged and a profession of religion at the same time supported.” (Andrew Fuller.)

**10. For**—a reason for their ‘destruction and perdition.’ **The love of money is the (a) root of all evil**—or, *all evils, all kinds of evil.* It is not said that it is the only root of evil, but that from it all kinds of evil may—and do, in fact—spring. It is a germ, a prolific source of every form of evil. **Which** (that is, money) **while some coveted after**—literally, *stretched themselves after, eagerly pressed after.* **Have erred** (*been led astray*) **from the faith**—that is, from their Christian principles as well as from the true doctrine of the gospel. (1:6, 19; 4:1-3.) Moral wrong and doctrinal error are always in Paul conceived as conjoined; the loss of subjective faith in Christ is the fountain of both. On the sin and folly of hoarding earthly wealth, compare the parable of the rich fool. (Luke 12:13-21.) **And have pierced themselves through with many sorrows**—as a sword piercing through the soul (Luke 2:35), or as “the thorns” of the parable (Matt. 13:22). It refers, perhaps, more directly to the pangs of conscience which such experience in view of their sins, but not excluding the miseries that come from the conscious loss of true manhood and the multiplied anxieties and troubles connected with wealth seeking. The lust for wealth thus brings the double loss, of faith and of happiness.

**11-16. TIMOTHY CHARGED, AS A MINISTER OF GOD, TO PURSUE HIGHER AND NOBLER OBJECTS.**—1. He is exhorted: (a) To flee a self-seeking worldliness, and follow the

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, 12 <sup>1</sup>patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession 13 in the sight of many witnesses. I charge thee in the sight of God, who <sup>2</sup>quickeneth all things, and of Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed

<sup>1</sup> Or, *stedfastness*. . . . <sup>2</sup> Or, *preserveth all things alive*.

virtues of a Christian life; (b) to maintain the Christian conflict, seizing with his eye its glorious end, eternal life; and to this he is incited by his divine call to eternal life and his public profession of the gospel. (11, 12.) 2. (a) He is solemnly charged, as in the sight of God and of Christ, to fulfill his mission with all purity and fidelity until the appearing of Christ, which God will bring about in his own appointed times; (b) the certainty that God will bring to pass Christ's appearing is shown from the character of God, as almighty in power and authority, possessed of undivided and unfailing life, exalted above human vision and approach, and worthy of honor and power everlasting. (13-16)

**11. But thou**—in contrast with the ‘some.’ (ver. 10.) **O man of God**—the usual designation of the prophets. (1 Sam. 9:6; 1 Kings 17:18). Here used of Timothy as one dedicated to the service of God. It suggests his exalted office and mission as a dissuasive from a low, selfish spirit of earthly accumulation. (2 Tim. 3:17.) **Flee these things**—the love of money and the manifold evils which attend it. **But follow after righteousness, godliness**—the former denoting rectitude, uprightness in the life toward man; the latter, piety in the life toward God. **Faith, love**—the fount sources of Christian character and life. **Patience, meekness**—the one signifying a steadfast endurance under trials; the other, a spirit which gently bears wrong without resentment and retaliation. The last is the grace “whose active side is *love* (*ἀγάπη*), and its passive side *long-suffering* (*μακροθυμία*).” (Stier.) (2 Tim. 2:22.) ‘Meekness’—the word, as found in the corrected text, is stronger than that usually rendered meekness, denoting, in an intensive way, *gentleness*, or *tenderness of feeling*.

**12. Fight the good fight of faith**—literally, *Contend the good contest*, referring to contests in the games, whether boxing, racing,

or other forms of contest. The figure, taken from athletes contending in the Greek games, was a common and favorite one with Paul. See 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Eph. 6:10-17; Phil. 3:12-14; 1 Tim. 1:18; 2 Tim. 4:7. **Lay hold on eternal (the everlasting) life**. The eye is to be fixed intently on the glorious prize, life eternal, to animate him in the contest. It is elsewhere called “the crown of life” (James 1:12), the “unfading crown of glory” (1 Peter 5:4). “Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold of (in and by that fight) eternal life.” (Winer.) **Whereunto (everlasting life) thou art also called**—referring to his calling at conversion. Everlasting life, not earthly wealth, was that to which, in becoming a Christian, he was called. **And hast professed a good profession** (or, *confessed a good confession*) **before many witnesses**—alluding to the well-known public confession of the gospel made at baptism. The remembrance that he was called by God to eternal life, and that in the most public manner he had made confession of the gospel, should now incite him to maintain the glorious conflict on which he thus entered, not yielding it to seek mere earthly good.

**13. I give thee charge in the sight of God.** As in 5:21, the apostle here represents God and the spiritual world as present and witnessing both the charge given and the conduct of Timothy in his high office. **Who quickeneth all things**—and who, therefore, if thou art put to death, is able to raise thee up in the resurrection of the just. Or, according to another reading (*ξωγονοῦντος*),—which is, perhaps, equally attested,—*who preserveth in life all things*; and who, therefore, as omnipotent and omnypresent, is able to protect thee in a courageous defense of the gospel. (Matt. 10:29-33.) For this latter word, compare Luke 17:33; Acts 7:19. It is adopted as the true reading here by Alford, Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, and most editors. **And be-**

14 That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebutable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15 Whieh in his times he shall shew, *who* is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

1 Or, *his*..... 2 Gr. *them that reign as kings*.

**fore Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession**—referring to Christ's testimony before Pilate, where he bore witness to his person and his redemptive work (*John 18:33-38; 19:8-11*), and then sealed the testimony with his blood. The design is to inspire Timothy with boldness in his great office as an ambassador for Christ, by presenting at once the sure basis of the gospel in Christ's solemn attestation of its truth, and the sublime example of its confession by Christ, even when in peril of death. “Christ died, not only as a Sacrifice, but as a Martyr; and he witnessed a good confession when he was arraigned before Pilate, saying, ‘My kingdom is not of this world; I am come to bear witness of the truth.’” (Henry.) ‘Witnessed,’ testified to it, confirming the certainty of the things confessed by himself making the confession. ‘A good confession.’ The public confession made by each Christian in his baptism is, for substance, the same which Christ himself made, since it involves the same testimony to his person and work, and acknowledges him as King.

**14. That thou keep this commandment**—meaning, not some special command, but the charge, or duty, laid on him as a minister, especially as related to the gospel committed to him and to his work in Ephesus. (1:18.) **Without spot, unrebutable**—words which may be referred grammatically, either to ‘thou’ or to ‘commandment,’ but seem most naturally to belong to the latter. This charge, then, as a treasure, or a priceless jewel, he is to keep *unstained and without reproach*; a figure in which Timothy is enjoined so to conduct himself in his sacred office that, before God and man, the office shall appear in its true moral purity and lustre, unmarred by defects which shall obscure its dignity and worth, and thus weaken its power. **Until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ**—the visible manifestation of Christ at his Second Coming, which in the New Testament is so often placed in the foreground as the glorious goal of the Christian Dispensation. See *Matt. 25:31; Acts 1:*

14 the good confession; that thou keep the commandment, without spot, without reproach, until the 15 appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in *15* own times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of *2* kings, and Lord of

10, 11; 1 Cor. 1:8; Phil. 1:6-10; 2 Tim. 4:1; Titus 2:13. The very greatness of the event made it seem near, like some vast mountain, which, as it lifts its lofty summit above the horizon, though actually distant, yet from its magnitude seems within a day's journey. That Paul, however, did not assume to know the time of Christ's Second Coming appears from the expression below, ‘in his own times,’ which refers it to the as yet unrevealed “times or seasons, which the Father has put in his own power” (*Acts 1:7*); and that he did not regard the ‘appearing’ as immediately imminent is plain from *Rom. 11:23-32; 2 Thess. 2:1-12*, where he predicts the events which must precede it, as, indeed, is also necessarily implied in *Eph. 2:7*. Compare *Col. 1:26*, where he speaks of the *ages* (*ἀιώνες*) of the New Dispensation as *the ages to come*, implying a series of ages to be unfolded during the Christian period. For ‘the appearing’ (*ἐπιφανέα*), compare *2 Thess. 2:18*. The other words used to denote the Second Coming are *revelation* (*ἀποκάλυψις*), and *presence* or *coming* (*παρουσία*); the word here emphasizes the visibility and glory of it, as a manifestation of the now invisible majesty and power of the God-Man.

**15. Which in his times he shall show**—or, *which* (manifestation) *in his own* (appointed) *times he shall cause to appear*. The events of redemption are everywhere represented as taking place “in due time,” or according to an order and time appointed by the Father (*Gal. 6:9; Titus 1:3*); and the time of Christ's Second Coming is especially said to be known only by the Father, and to be under his special power. (*Mark 13:32; Acts 1:6,7.*) This verse, therefore, and the following, seem clearly descriptive of God the Father, and the divinity of Christ is shown here only from the fact that the same works and attributes are in other passages ascribed also to him. “*His own* (fitting) *times*—the plural implies successive stages in the manifestation of the kingdom of God, each having its own appropriate time, the regulating principle and knowledge

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

16 <sup>1</sup>lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power eternal. Amen.

17 Charge them that are rich in this present <sup>2</sup> world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *them that rule as lords*. . . . . <sup>2</sup> Or. *age*.

of which rests with the Father." (Fausset.)

**Who is the blessed and only Potentate.** This and the following clauses are appositive in the Greek, defining and unfolding the subject of the preceding verb, 'shall shew'; 'which he'—namely, the blessed and only Potentate—shall shew. 'The only Potentate'—"the only One in the universe possessed of independent right and absolute sovereignty." (Fairbairn.) His almighty power and universal authority are emphasized, because of the transcendent greatness of the event he 'shall shew'—namely, Christ's Second Appearing, with its attending events, the resurrection of the dead, the new heavens and new earth, the final judgment, the glorification of the redeemed church, and the perdition of the ungodly. On the attributes 'blessed' and 'only,' compare the usage, 1 : 11, 17; John 17 : 3. **The King of kings and Lord of lords**—expressive of his sovereign authority and rule, especially as exercised in the affairs of this world. Kings and senates hold their authority only under his sovereign dominion. (Ps. 2.)

**16. Who only hath immortality**—undervived, essential life, as distinguished from created and consequently mutable and destructible life. Creatures are immortal only from the free gift of God. Their life is derived, but his is undervived, original, uncreated. "The Father hath life in himself," and possesses thus an absolute immortality. (John 5 : 26.) The attributes here ascribed to the Father are also predicated of the Son. Thus, almighty power (Isa. 9 : 6; Matt. 28 : 18; Rev. 1 : 8); universal sovereignty (Col. 2 : 10; Rev. 17 : 14; 19 : 13); immortality, or essential and fontal life. (John 1 : 4; 5 : 26.)

**Dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto.** He dwells in light, which as an atmosphere envelopes him, and to whose dazzling brightness no creature can approach. "Thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment." (Ps. 104 : 2; Dan. 7 : 9, 10; 1 John 1 : 5.)

**Whom no man hath seen, nor can see**—or, *whom no one of men (ever) saw, or can see*.

God, in his essential being, is invisible. He is "the invisible God," hidden in the depths of accessless light, probably, from all created beings. (1 : 17; Col. 1 : 15; Heb. 11 : 27.) "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1 : 18.) The vision of God, however, is in some sense promised to the saints (compare Matt. 5 : 8; 1 Cor. 13 : 12; 1 John 3 : 2; Rev. 22 : 4); but such vision can never be complete sight, since in the nature of things the finite can never perfectly comprehend the Infinite. **To whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen**—that is, *to whom* (as alone in himself worthy, and to whom only they properly belong) *let honor and power everlasting be ascribed*. 'Amen,' an emphatic word, emphasizing the prayer in the doxology; *even so* may honor and power be truly ascribed to him. See Rom. 11 : 33-36; 1 Tim. 1 : 17; 1 Peter 4 : 11; Jude 25; Rev. 1 : 6; 5 : 13.

**17-19. A Charge for the Rich.**—Resuming here the general subject of ver. 6-10, the apostle, as he had there spoken of those *desiring to be rich*, now directed Timothy to give a special charge to those who *are rich*: 1. To avoid pride and a false trust in earthly wealth, and rather to place their trust on God, by whom all good is given, not to be selfishly hoarded, but to be enjoyed. (17.) 2. To make use of their wealth in blessing others, and thus, by treasuring therefrom a good foundation for the future, lay hold on the true life. (18, 19.)

**17. Charge them that are rich in this world.** Ephesus was a city noted for its great wealth. Christianity had profoundly moved all classes there, as is clearly indicated in the events recorded in Acts 19; especially in the mob raised by Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen, because "not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia," Paul had "turned away much people," thus bringing their trade in the shrines of Diana into disrepute, and

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

18 giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute,<sup>1</sup> willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is *life* indeed.

1 Or, *ready to sympathise.*

putting a stop to their gains. Evidently some wealthy persons had already entered the church. Ministers are in great danger from an undue deference to the rich, of failing to deal plainly with them; Paul, therefore, lays special injunction on Timothy to set distinctly before them, alike the serious perils and the blessed possibilities of wealth. If rightly used, it may be transmuted into enduring, heavenly riches and made means of attaining the true and real life. **That they be not highminded**—“that they do not carry themselves haughtily.” (Bloomfield.) A special danger of the rich. (Rom. 12:16.) **Nor trust in uncertain riches**—better, *nor have their hope fixed on the uncertainty of riches.* *Uncertainty* is the conspicuous quality in earthly wealth, and the apostle is, therefore, “hyperbolically representing the hope as reposed on the very quality of riches which least justified it.” (Alford.) A hope fixed on riches is fixed on an uncertainty. See Ps. 62:10; Prov. 11:28; 23:5; Jer. 9:23; Matt. 6:19, 20; Mark 10:24. **But in the living God.** (Ps. 37:3-7, 16-26.) The word ‘living,’ which is wanting in the best manuscripts, was interpolated probably from 4:10. **Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy**—or, *for enjoyment.* Instead of being eager for riches, or vain in the possession of them, they should set their hope on God, since it is he who is furnishing richly all things, and that, not as a stimulant to pride or hoarding, but as a means of enjoyment. “To enjoy, not to rest our hearts on.” (Wiesinger.) See Eccl. 5:18, 19; 2 Peter 1:3.

**18. That they do good**—the purpose God has in giving all things richly to them. It is that they live lives of holy beneficence, as God himself (Ps. 119:68; Acts 14:17), or, as Christ, “who went about doing good.” (Acts 10:38.) This is the grand opportunity God gives to the rich; they may transmute this mere earthly and perishable wealth into the true and imperishable riches. **That they be rich in good works**—or, *in noble deeds;* that they use their wealth in noble deeds, and thus ac-

quire the enduring, eternal wealth. (Luke 12:21, 33; James 6:5.) **Ready to distribute**—*free in giving;* opposed to those who, clinging to their wealth, give grudgingly; for “God loveth a cheerful giver.” (2 Cor. 9:7.) **Willing to communicate**—ready to make others sharers of their earthly good; opposed to such as, without practical sympathy for others’ need, are using wealth only for self. See Luke 3:11; Gal. 6:6; Eph. 4:28; Heb. 13:16. “Our houses are built, our vineyards are planted, around the base of a volcano. They may be fair and flourishing to-day—to-morrow ashes may be all that remains. Open your hands wide then, while they contain any blessings to bestow; for of that which you give you can never be deprived.” (Payson.)

**19. Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come**—or, *Laying up for themselves, as a treasure therefrom* (namely, from deeds of benevolence), *a good foundation* (an adequate ground, or basis of expectation) *for the future.* (Prov. 11:24, 25; 13:17; Luke 6:46-49.) Two thoughts are contained in this concise statement: 1. From such deeds of benevolence they are accumulating a treasure; not, in the sense of the Romish Church, a treasure of merit, but, in the sense of Christ (Matt. 6:19, 20), a treasure consisting in a holy character formed by the exercise of unselfish and holy dispositions, and in deeds of mercy, which Christ will recognize at the last day as done unto him (Matt. 10:42; 25:40), and which shall also, of “the mammon of unrighteousness,” make friends who will welcome them into “the everlasting habitations” (Luke 16:9; Acts 10:4). Earthly wealth, thus transmuted into heavenly riches, is gathered as an indestructible treasure awaiting the soul in the future world. 2. This treasure, thus gathered, forms a good foundation in reference to the future. Not the meritorious foundation of a sinner’s acceptance with God,—this is always and only the redeeming work of Christ,—but the foundation for the rewards of grace that God has promised

20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

1 Gr. *the deposit.*

to his people. For, although salvation is all of unmerited grace, yet everywhere in Scripture, rewards, temporal and eternal, are promised to Christians as the recompense of holy dispositions exercised and good works done (Mark 10: 28-30; Rev. 2: 10); and this, because out of a holy character and life flows, as a moral necessity, blessedness here and hereafter; for such a life is in harmony with God's character and government, and all the forces of the universe, therefore, must "work together for good" to him who lives it. (Rom. 8: 28.) A holy character, fruitful in holy deeds, thus forms 'a good foundation,' both as to the preparation for, and the basis of, a blessed future. (Matt. 7: 24, 25.)

**That they may lay hold on eternal life**—or, *That they may* ("as it were, setting foot on this foundation"), *lay hold on that which is indeed life, or, that which is truly life.* The object in treasuring up a good foundation is that thus they may lay hold of, or seize, that which is really life; for it is precisely in exercising these holy, benevolent dispositions that they attain the true life. Holy, beneficent living is the real or eternal life, which thus has its imperfect beginnings here, but will reach its perfection in heaven; and they who thus live, by the holy character they form and the deeds of mercy they work, are laying hold of the real life. Its beginnings here are "a good foundation" for confidence of its completeness there. (Matt. 25: 21, 29, 34-40; Luke 19: 17, 26.) "The attainment of a true life is thus the highest end which the rich must seek by the wise and worthy use of his wealth." (Van Oosterzee.) "Whoso builds on the changeable must needs be lost; but whoso builds on the immortal, changeless, God lives in his life, his wealth, and shall share his eternity." (Von Gerlach.) 'Eternal.' Instead of this the best text has *really* (*εντης*), that which is really life; the contrast is thus between selfish, worldly living as not real life, and unselfish, beneficent living as that which is true life, in its proper idea and end. The natural, selfish, worldly man exists, but does not live; only the spiritual, redeemed man, who is like him "who went about doing good," has the real and enduring life. (Ps. 16: 11.)

20 O Timothy, guard <sup>1</sup>that which is committed unto thee, turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so

**20, 21. SOLEMN CLOSING CHARGE TO TIMOTHY**, enjoining him to keep the sacred trust of the gospel committed to him, and to avoid those foolish and destructive errors through which some had already turned away from the faith; and closing with the invocation of God's grace on him.

**20. O Timothy**—an address specially direct and earnest, as introducing the closing exhortation, in which the substance of the Epistle is gathered up and emphasized. **Keep that which is committed to thy trust.** The phrase, 'that which . . . trust,' is one word in the Greek (*παραθήκη*), and signifies a *deposit*—that which has been deposited with another for safe keeping. Thus 2 Tim. 1: 12, "He is able to keep *that which I have committed unto him against that day.*" Here, as also 2 Tim. 1: 14, it means the gospel, that "sound doctrine," which had been committed to Timothy to preserve in its purity and to publish to men. Others, as Calvin, De Wette, Huther, regard it as referring to the ministerial office; but it is evident that he is to keep, or guard, this trust by "avoiding" false doctrine, which certainly suggests that the trust referred to is the pure doctrine, the gospel as committed by Christ to the ministry. "The deposit," saith he, 'do thou keep.' The talent of the catholic faith preserve thou inviolate and unimpaired. What has been intrusted to thee, let this remain with thee; let this be handed down by thee. Gold thou hast received; gold do thou return." (Vincentius, A. D. 484.) **Avoiding profane and vain babblings and oppositions**—or, "dialectic antitheses." The adjective 'profane' belongs to both nouns. **Of science falsely so called**—or, *Of that which is falsely named knowledge.* Knowledge (*γνῶσις*) was one of the spiritual gifts belonging to the apostolic age, by which inspired insight was given by the Holy Spirit into the meaning of Old Testament Scripture and into the profound truths of the gospel. (1 Cor. 1: 6; 12: 8; 13: 2, 8.) Men had already risen professing to possess this *charism*, who only counterfeited it, and whose teaching consisted largely in empty verbiage and artfully-drawn distinctions, relating to subjects of which we

21 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

21 called; which some professing have <sup>1</sup>erred concerning the faith. Grace be with you.

1 Gr. *missed the mark.*

can have no actual knowledge. (Col. 2:8, 18, 23.) Out of this pretended higher knowledge, or secret wisdom, doubtless arose in the following century the various systems called Gnosticism. Such speculations would naturally find in the semi-oriental population of Ephesus many followers. But from these Timothy is to turn away, and thus keep inviolate and unimpaired the sacred trust committed to him.

**21. Which** ('science falsely so called') **some professing have erred concerning the faith.** 'Erred'—literally, *missed the mark, swerved from.* (1:6; 2 Tim. 2:18.) Misled by these vain speculations, they had *missed the mark*, had turned away from the truth of the gospel; and the disastrous result of such teachings is held up as a solemn warning to Timothy. **Grace be with thee.** Rather, *The grace* (the well-known grace which God gives)

*be with thee.* Some important manuscripts, as the Sinaitic and Alexandrian, read *with you*, in the plural, thus including the church in the benediction. This also is the accepted reading of 2 Tim. 4:22. **Amen**—a doubtful reading, rejected from the text by most editors.

The subscription to the Epistle—which in the different manuscripts is greatly varied, both in substance and in form—has no claim to genuineness. It was added at a later period, and, in the form found in the Common Version, was appended, probably, on the mistaken supposition that this was "the epistle from Laodicea," referred to in Col. 4:16. The Roman province of "Phrygia Pacatiana" was not created till after the fourth century, a fact which shows the late date of this subscription.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

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## WHEN AND TO WHAT PLACE WRITTEN.

The martyrdom of Paul, as already seen, probably occurred in the summer, A. D. 68. This Epistle was written not long before that event, in a dungeon at Rome, during an interval between his trial before the Imperial Court on the first charge, and his trial on the second, which resulted in his condemnation. The Epistle, therefore, may be dated early in the fall, A. D. 67.

Whether it was addressed to Timothy at Ephesus is uncertain, but several circumstances point strongly to that place. "Alexander the coppersmith" is mentioned (4:14), and an Alexander is noticed as put forward by the Jews in the theatre at Ephesus. (Acts 19:33.) A Hymeneus is referred to (2:17), who may have been the same as the Hymeneus spoke of as at Ephesus. (1 Tim. 1:20.) Onesiphorus is mentioned as having ministered to the apostle at Ephesus (1:18), while "the household of Onesiphorus" are among those to whom salutations are sent. (4:19.) The heretical teachers and their doctrines as presented in this Epistle have a marked similarity to those in the First Epistle, which was certainly addressed to Ephesus. The local notices, in general, agree best with the supposition that Timothy was then in that city; and the preponderance of judgment among scholars has always favored this view.

## OCCASION AND PURPOSE.

The apostle was now a prisoner, held as "a malefactor," and undergoing the nameless horrors of a Roman dungeon; while in near prospect appeared the end of his course in a martyr's death. He desired, therefore, to see once more this loved and trusted fellow-laborer, and impart, if possible face to face, his dying instructions. Most of his friends and disciples, appalled by the terrors of the Neronian persecution, were scattered from him; so that, at his first hearing before the Imperial Tribunal, he stood unbefriended and alone. He might well, therefore, like his Lord when about to suffer, feel the need of human sympathy, especially such as the presence of this ever-faithful friend would afford. Hence, he urges Timothy to hasten his coming to Rome; but lest the disciple should reach the city too late, and he should see him no more on earth, the apostle writes to him special directions and solemn warnings respecting the duties and dangers of the Christian ministry, and charges him to exercise his sacred office with holy self-devotion and unswerving fidelity. To animate him in such a career, he first appeals to Christ's unchanging faithfulness to his faithful servants, as seen in his own case, when he stood before the Imperial Court, where all men forsook "him," nevertheless the Lord stood with "him," and strengthened "him," and then holds up "the crown of life, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge," shall bestow on all who serve him at the last

day. The Epistle, while thus admirably serving its immediate purpose, stands through all the ages as the dying charge of Paul to the Christian ministry, to warn, to guide, and to inspire them in the noblest of earthly vocations.

#### THE CONTENTS.

This last of the Pauline Epistles, issuing from the dungeon of the aged and worn apostle, is marvelous in the thoughtfulness, tenderness, and wealth of affection that it exhibits; but, like the other, it has no premeditated plan. The topics occur as they welled up in the fruitful mind and large heart of Paul. The following is a general outline.

*Chapter First.*—Salutation and invocation (1, 2); expression of his gratitude to God for the faith of Timothy (3-5); Timothy is exhorted to a fearless faith in the exercise of his ministry (6-12); admonition to an unwavering adherence to the apostle's doctrine, and fidelity to the ministerial trust (13-18).

*Chapter Second.*—Necessity of being filled with the power which comes from the grace of Christ (1, 2); exhortation to endure, with Paul, hardship for the gospel, with the manner and motives of such faithful endurance (3-13); directions respecting his spirit and conduct as a Christian teacher, especially in dealing with disturbing and heretical tendencies, believing that, in all changes, the foundation of God stands sure, and the pure gospel shall in the end triumph (14-26).

*Chapter Third.*—Troublous times predicted in the last days, with a description of those who fall away, and warning against them (1-9); exhortation and motives to steadfastness in these perils, especially from the certainty and fullness of God's word (10-17).

*Chapter Fourth.*—Solemn charge to fidelity and earnestness in the ministry, especially in view of the imminence of defections from the faith, and of the apostle's removal from earth (1-8); Timothy urged to hasten his coming to Rome, with various directions and warnings (9-15); account of Paul's first defense before the Imperial Court (16-18); various salutations, with the benediction (19-22).

# THE SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

## CHAPTER I.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,  
2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus <sup>1</sup>by the will of God, according to the promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my beloved child; Grace, mercy, peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Gr. *through*.

**Ch. 1: 1, 2. SALUTATION.**—In which, 1. Paul characterizes himself (*a*) as an apostle of Jesus Christ; (*b*) as called to this office by the will of God; and (*c*) as having received it, in order to carry into effect the promise of life which is in Christ. 2. He addresses the Epistle to Timothy, as his dearly beloved son, and invokes on him the threefold blessing of grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus.** (See notes on 1 Tim. 1: 1, on the meaning of ‘apostle.’) **By (or through) the will of God.** This divine call to the apostolic office is affirmed in nearly all the epistles, and in some, as Gal. 1: 1, is emphasized, in order to authenticate the Epistle as of divine authority. Here, as this Epistle was doubtless to be read in the church, the statement of his divine call would not only show the inspired authority of its teaching, but also confirm the authority of Timothy, as the assistant and representative of a divinely called apostle. “In connecting his apostleship here, as so frequently, with God’s will, he sought to place it above, not merely any choice or desert of his own, but also every kind of elective agency that was simply human, and to bring it into immediate connection with the mind and purposes of the Supreme.” (Fairbairn.) As an apostle, he was the direct medium through which God spoke to men; it was plainly necessary that his appointment should be, not from men, but directly from God. **According to the promise of life**—or, *in pursuance of, or furtherance of*. The divine appointment of Paul to the apostleship was in order to carry into effect, with a view to the fulfillment of, the promise of life. The preposition ‘according to’ points out the object, or intention, of his divine appointment as an apostle. “So that

I might proclaim to men the promised eternal life.” (Theodoret.) This is the grand purpose of the ministry; and hence the message they bear to men is called the gospel, *glad tidings, promise of life*; namely, the “eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began.” (Titus 1: 2.) “The promise of life in Christ held out to a dead world thus appears here as the purpose of the apostle’s calling.” (Wiesinger.) **Which is in Christ Jesus.** This life is in Christ as its source, and as secured to the believer by the work of Christ. (John 11: 26, 27.) He is “our life.” (Col. 3: 3, 4.) The life is in Christ, not in us, and consequently is not of works, as something we merit, nor as something evolved from within us by personal strivings, but of grace, as something freely flowing forth from him to us, by virtue of his spontaneous, unmerited mercy.

**2. To Timothy, my dearly beloved son.** In 1 Tim. 1: 2, he addresses him as “my own,” or, *genuine* “child,” but here as his *beloved child*, emphasizing his love for him, which perhaps better comports with the circumstances of this Epistle, as written after a most tender and sorrowful parting (4), and in immediate expectation of his martyrdom (4: 6-8). Love would naturally be the dominant feeling at such a moment. **Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord.** The common form of invocation in nearly all the epistles, except the inclusion of *mercy*, which is added only in the Pastoral Epistles. See notes on 1 Tim. 1: 2.

**3-5. HIS GRATITUDE TO GOD FOR THE FAITH OF TIMOTHY.**—1. He is grateful to God, whom he, after the example of his ancestors, is serving in a pure conscience. 2. He states the circumstances under which his gratitude is awakened; it is while making unceasing remembrance of Timothy in his prayers—

3 I thank God, whom I serve from *my forefathers* with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother

3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, how unceasing is my remembrance of thee in my supplications, night and day 4 longing to see thee, remembering thy tears, that I 5 may be filled with <sup>1</sup>joy; having been reminded of the unfeigned faith that is in thee; which dwelt first

<sup>1</sup> Or, *joy in being reminded.*

a remembrance which is prompted by his longing to see him, that, in their reunion, he may be filled with joy, and is strengthened by the memory of the tears of Timothy at their parting. 3. The occasion that awakens his gratitude is the unfeigned faith of Timothy, of which he had been reminded; which faith had before dwelt in his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice, and, the apostle feels assured, dwells in him also.

**3, 4. I thank God.** Compare on the whole passage Rom. 1:8-12; Eph. 1:16; 1 Thess. 3:9, 10; where, as in other passages, a similar gratitude to God for grace bestowed on others is expressed. **Whom I serve (worship) from my forefathers;** or, *after the example of my forefathers;* referring probably in 'forefathers' to his more immediate ancestors, as in 1 Tim. 5:4, where the word is used of parents and grandparents. Paul was of a godly ancestry (Acts 23:6, 7), and he declares that the God whom they, as pious Jews, had sincerely worshiped, he also, with like sincerity, is worshiping. In becoming a Christian he has not, as his enemies alleged departed from the God of Israel, the God of his fathers; on the contrary, as he everywhere asserts, he has, in accepting Christ, followed the faith of all the godly Israelites in the past, while his countrymen, in rejecting Christ, have apostatized from the true faith of Israel. (Acts 24:14; Rom. 4:12; 9:31-33; 10:3; 2 Cor. 11:22; Phil. 3:5.) See also the glorious array of the ancient worthies in Heb. ch. 11, who as heroes of faith, are held up as examples, inciting to faith in Christ. **With pure conscience**—marking the ethical sphere in which his service to God was rendered. Not only did he worship the same God as his fathers, but, like them, he worshiped in 'a pure conscience,' with sincerity, honestly, according to the light he had. Throughout the apostle's life, even before his conversion, his religious course had been strictly conscientious. He boldly declared before the Sanhedrin, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." (Acts

23:1; Phil. 3:6.) He does, indeed, acknowledge that he was a "blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious"; but in this he did not act in opposition, but rather in strict obedience, to his conscience, for he did it "ignorantly in unbelief." (1 Tim. 1:13; Acts 26:9.) After his conversion, he declared, "I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men." (Acts 24:14-16; 2 Cor. 1:12; Heb. 13:18.) **That without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers**—marking the circumstances under which the apostle's gratitude is awakened. It is in connection with his prayers, in which there is an unceasing remembrance of Timothy. This fact affords a beautiful insight into the apostle's habitual life, showing how, as living in the perpetual atmosphere of prayer, he fulfilled his own injunctions, "Pray without ceasing," "Continuing instant in prayer," (1 Thess. 5:17; Rom. 12:12.) His whole life moved in the element of prayer; and in this is found the source of his character, as well as the hiding of his power.

**4. Night and day; greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy**—better as, for substance, as in the Revised Version: Night and day longing to see thee (remembering thy tears), that I may be filled with joy. His perpetual remembrance of him in prayer is prompted by that warm affection, which leads to a constant longing to see him, that, in the reunion he may be filled with joy; and it is intensified as he recalls the tears of Timothy at their parting. "The longing after Timothy occasions the continual thought of him in the prayers of the apostle, and it is nourished by the recollection of Timothy's tears." (Huther.)

**5. When I call to (having been put in) remembrance (of) the unfeigned faith that is in thee—or, having received a reminding of, etc.** "Through some circumstances not further indicated to us, his recollection was aroused touching something indeed which

Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; 6 and, I am persuaded, in thee also. For the which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying

1 Gr. stir into flame.

he knew already, but which now he had observed anew: namely, the unfeigned faith which dwelt in Timothy." (Van Oosterzee.) Thus, also, Wiesinger, Bengel, Ellicott. 'Unfeigned': opposed to an assumed, hypocritical faith. (Phil. 2:22; 1 Tim. 1:5.) **Which** (such as) dwelt first in thy grandmother **Lois**, and thy mother **Eunice**—that is, the unfeigned faith of Timothy was such as, of like character with, that which had before dwelt in his maternal ancestors. Of Lois we have no other mention, but of the mother, Eunice, it is said, in Acts 16:1, that she was "a Jewess and believed," and, 3:15, that by her maternal care, Timothy "from a child" had "known the holy Scriptures." **And I am persuaded that in thee also**—an unequivocal expression of confidence in the sincerity and reality of Timothy's faith, the conjunction (8e, but) here being, according to a common Greek usage, appositive in effect, making the words signify: *a faith which, I feel confident, dwells also in thee.* For this confidence respecting Timothy Paul had abundant ground from the character he had shown. (Phil. 2:20.) "Lois and Eunice seem to have 'waited for the consolation of Israel' before they heard the gospel, and thus were prepared to receive it; and having diligently given Timothy a religious education, it greatly conduced to his being made a partaker of the same faith, as the apostle was fully persuaded concerning him." (Scott.) The believing wife had here the influence on the child contemplated in 1 Cor. 7:14; her training, like that of many a faithful Christian mother, was blessed to the conversion of her son, and the example may well inspire to maternal fidelity. While divine grace does not run in the blood, as something transmitted, yet there is a true sense in which moral and spiritual tendencies and characteristics are transmitted; and assuredly, birth from a godly ancestry and childhood life in a Christian home are often most potent factors in the character of the man. All expositors, with Paley, note the coincidence that, in Acts 16:1, the mother only is said to have believed, and

here it is her faith, not the father's, which is mentioned.

**6-12. TIMOTHY EXHORTED TO AN ACTIVE AND FEARLESS FAITH IN THE EXERCISE OF HIS MINISTERIAL GIFT.**—To this he is incited: 1. By the nature of the Christian spirit, as imparted by God. It is not cowardly, but fearless. Instead, therefore, of being ashamed of Christ's gospel, and of Paul, imprisoned for Christ's sake, he should rather share in the apostle's hardships, exercising a faith in some degree commensurate with the power of God, exhibited in his salvation. (7, 8.) 2. By the grace of God, in that (a) he saved us and called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and undeserved favor; (b) this grace was given us in Christ before eternal ages, but was manifested by the appearing of Christ, who destroyed the power of death, and through the gospel brought to light life and immortality. (9, 10.) 3. By the example of the apostle himself, who, appointed to the ministerial office, and thereby subjected to suffering, was, nevertheless, not ashamed, since he knew the character of God, whom he had trusted, and was confident of God's ability to keep to the final day the great interests of his soul, which he had committed to him. (11, 12.)

**6. Wherefore**—that is, because of my confidence in the genuineness of thy faith, as before expressed. (Ver. 5.) **I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up—rekindle**, as a fire; or here, perhaps, *kindle up*, as of causing a fire already bright to burn still brighter; "stir it up, as fire under the embers." The same figure is found (1 Thess. 5:19), "Quench not the Spirit," where the Spirit within the soul is compared to a fire, which opposition or neglect may quench. The gift of the Spirit at the Pentecost appeared as a tongue of flame. (Acts 2:3.) **The gift of God**—not the grace received at conversion, but the ministerial gift, including all the gifts for the sacred office, with special emphasis here, perhaps, on boldness in the faith. The thought is not that Timothy had been unfaith-

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

7 on of my hands. For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and discipline. Be

I Gr. *sobering*.

ful in the use of this gift, which is forbidden by Paul's thankfulness to God for his faith, expressed in ver. 3-5; but as the apostle himself was soon to die, and weightier responsibilities would thus fall on the disciple. Timothy, instead of timidly shrinking from responsibility, as was, perhaps, natural to him, should rather, with higher courage, make still larger use of his gift, kindling the sacred fire to a higher intensity to meet the duties of this larger sphere. This gift, though imparted by God, would increase or diminish, according as its possessor used it. Ministers may decrease in power by lack of industry, by absorption in other lines of thought and work, or, as was here the danger, by undue timidity and consequent failure in a bold, courageous exercise of their office. Little Faith fails in much that he might have done, and thus, though saved, fails of a full reward. (2 John 8.) On the other hand, the ministerial gift may be re-inflamed, endowed with larger power, by diligence, fidelity, faith, and a fervent and constant exercise of it. "Use gifts, and have gifts; 'to him that hath shall be given.' (Matt. 25: 29.)" (Henry.) **Which is in thee by (through) the putting on of my hands.** Three interpretations have here been proposed: 1. That the ministerial gift, defined as the power to minister effectually in preaching the word and administering the sacraments, was imparted by the laying on of Paul's hands, a view which is inconsistent (a) with the account of Timothy's separation to the ministry, which implies that his fitness for the office was perceived and was attested by the brethren of Lystra and Iconium before his ordination (Acts 16: 1-3); (b) with the facts also in the other cases of ordination, in both of which the gifts existed before the ordination, and their existence constituted the reason for ordaining them to the work (Acts 6: 6; 13: 3); and (c) with the plain directions to Timothy and Titus, which require that the requisite qualifications be found in candidates before they are placed in office. (1 Tim. 3: 1-7; 5: 22; Titus 1: 5-9.) 2. That the expression here indicates not the conferring of any gift by the imposition of Paul's hands, but only the public

recognition of Timothy's ministerial gift by Paul and the elders, a view which, while adequately explaining 1 Tim. 4: 14, where the gift was given "through prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery," does not adequately interpret this passage, where the gift is said to be in him *through, or by means of* (διὰ) the laying on of the apostle's hands—language which makes the imposition of Paul's hands, in some sense, the medium of conveying the gift. 3. That a gift for the ministry already existed in Timothy, but, through the laying on of an apostle's hands, this natural gift was exalted into a *charism*, or gift of the Holy Spirit, intensifying and enlarging this natural qualification. (Acts 8: 15-19.) This seems to me a fair interpretation of the words. According to this, the ordination of Timothy was attended with exceptional circumstances; for, when he was ordained, a distinct prophetic utterance designated him, as it had Barnabas and Saul, for the office; and Paul, as an apostle, united with the presbytery in the laying on of hands, so that he, through the imposition of an apostle's hands, received the supernatural gift of the Holy Spirit. Plainly, this cannot occur now, since there are neither prophets nor apostles in the church, and the *charisms* of the Spirit have ceased.

7. **For**—introducing an argument for stirring up his gift, and against that timidity which here, as elsewhere, is intimated as a natural characteristic of Timothy. Such timidity, the apostle urges, is not of God, and is to be resisted. **God hath not given (did not give) us the spirit of fear**—a spirit which shrinks from duty and responsibility in the presence of toil or danger. Fear is often a fatal snare. The wicked servant said: "I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth." (Matt. 25: 25.) But it is the nature of true religion to inspire a courageous faith and lift the soul above fear. (Acts 4: 13.) In all ages it has made the timid bold and nerved the fearful with courage and strength. **But of power**—the opposite of weakness in timidity. The Holy Spirit is designated as "power from on high," and his presence has always given power, es-

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;  
9 Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began;

not ashamed therefore of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but suffer hardship with the gospel according to the power of God; who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ

pecially a holy boldness in uttering the truth. (Luke 24:49; Acts 4:31.) **And of love**—that self-forgetting love to Christ, to the church, and to the souls of men, which exhorts, warns, rebukes with boldness and fidelity at whatever risk of consequences to self. **And of a sound mind** (*self-control*) — a self-control which restrains and gives calmness in danger. “The power of authoritative control and wise restraint, which, if we have but in sufficient measure, we shall not weakly bend to adverse circumstances, but make them bend to us.” (Fairbairn.) Thus Wiesinger, Ellicott, Van Oosterzee. Others translate either *correction*, as Alford and Huther; or, *chastisement*, as Conant, referring, in both cases, to decision and authority in the enforcement of discipline.

**8. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord.** Since God has given us such a spirit, be not timid, fearful, ashamed to bear testimony to our Lord—that is, to the gospel in all its doctrines and precepts and promises, of which Christ our Lord is the centre and the substance. (Acts 1:8.) **Nor of me his prisoner**—a prisoner for his sake. Be not ashamed of me, who am imprisoned for Christ’s sake, in failing either boldly to declare my apostolic authority and doctrine in Ephesus and Asia, or to come to Rome and identify thyself with me in my poverty and bonds. Some were ashamed, and had forsaken him in his great peril (1:10, 16), and the apostle was anxious that, amid this sad defection of others in the hour of danger, Timothy should prove faithful to Christ and his persecuted servant. There is no evidence here that Timothy had shown a lack of faith—the thanksgiving to God for his faith proves the reverse; but in the defection of many whom he had trusted, and in the near approach of the apostle’s death, it was natural for him to be solicitous to strengthen the spirit of Timothy. **But be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel**—or, *Suffer hardship with me for the gospel*. “Not suffer with the gospel, bear with it the disgrace attached

to it, but suffer *with me*, who also am suffering for the gospel.” (Van Oosterzee.) Thus most expositors. **According to the power of God**—that is, according to the power God has displayed in the work of our redemption, described in verses 9, 10. Let thy willingness to suffer for God be in some proportion to the power he has shown in the gospel to save thee. “He points to the great things done by God in the matter of our salvation as a ground and motive for something corresponding being done by us.” (Fairbairn.) Others, as Chrysostom: “Think not that thou hast to bear these afflictions by thine own power; nay, it is by the power of God.”

**9. Who hath saved us.** As a reason for enduring suffering ‘according to the power of God,’ he shows the greatness of God’s grace and power as displayed in our salvation. The passage is characteristically Pauline in thought and expression. ‘Who’—God the Father—‘saved us’; namely, all believers. “He who has experienced the power of God in his own salvation and calling must not, in view of this power, shrink from sufferings; with an answering confidence he must be ready to suffer for the gospel.” (Wiesinger.) **And called us with a holy calling.** It is God the Father who effectually calls his people. (Rom. 8:30; Eph. 1:18); and the vocation to which he calls them is also *holy*. The calling is an exercise of his holiness, and it leads to holiness in us. (Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10; 1 Peter 1:15.) “The call comes wholly from God, and claims us wholly for God. ‘Holy’ implies the separation of believers from the rest of the world unto God.” (Fausset.) **Not according to our works.** Our works were neither the consideration for which, nor the standard according to which, he saved and called us. Elsewhere he said: “By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. 2:8, 9.) “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.” (Titus 3:5.) “The origin of it is the free grace

10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

10 Jesus before times eternal, but hath now been manifested by the appearing of our Saviour Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality:

1 Gr. *incorruption.*

and eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus. If we had merited it, it had been hard to suffer for it; but our salvation by it is of free grace, and therefore we must not think much to suffer for it." (Henry.) **But according to his own purpose and grace.** 'His own' is here emphatic. He was self-moved, impelled by motives, not from without, but from within, himself. His design of mercy was called forth by no desert, no worthiness in us; but it was "according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in himself"; "according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Eph. 1: 9, n.) 'Grace'—free, unmerited favor—a favor, the grounds of which are in him who bestows, not in him who receives. **Which (grace) was given to us in Christ Jesus before the world began**—or, *before eternal times*. The grace was given to us believers—although we did not then personally exist—in Christ, as our Redeemer and Representative. The thought is elsewhere expressed: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." (Eph. 1: 4, 5; 1 Peter 1: 2.) Christ and his body, the church, are one and indissoluble in the divine mind, and grace was given to the chosen, therefore, when in eternity they were chosen in him. "'Which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.' It is a gift, and a free gift, not at all depending upon any conditions of the creature, and entirely proceeding from the sovereign will of God; and it was a gift from eternity; there was not only a purpose of grace in God's heart, and a promise of it so early, but there was a real donation of it in eternity; and though those to whom it was given did not then personally exist, yet Christ did, and he existed as a Covenant Head and Representative of his people; and they were in him, as members of him, as represented by him, being united to him; and this grace was given to him for them, and to them in him; in whom they were chosen, and

in whom they were blessed with all spiritual blessings." (Gill.) 'Before eternal times'—that is, prior to the series of ages during which the universe has existed; or, as elsewhere expressed, "before the foundation of the world." Compare Rom. 16: 25; Titus 1: 2; also 1 Cor. 2: 7; Eph. 3: 11. This grace was, in the divine purpose, given in Christ to believers prior to the creation, before time began; and "what God determines in eternity is as good as already made actual in time." (De Wette.)

**10. But**—the purpose of grace, thus formed in eternity, was realized, unfolded in time. **Is now made manifest.** This grace, which was given in Christ before time began, but had been hidden during all the ages, was now, at the epoch of the incarnation, manifested. (Rom. 16: 25, 26; Col. 1: 26.) **By the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ**—his appearing in the flesh referring, not to his birth only, but to his whole manifestation, in his life, death, and resurrection. This manifestation of God in our humanity disclosed the grace which had hitherto been hidden. **Who hath abolished death**—or, *in that he made death, indeed, of no effect.* He "took away the power from death." (Tittman.) Compare 1 Cor. 15: 26; Heb. 2: 14. "Death appears here, as also elsewhere (for example, Rom. 6: 23), not as strictly bodily or spiritual death ('dead in trespasses,' Col. 2: 13), but the power which, in consequence of sin, has seized alike on body and soul, and inflicts natural, as the precursor of eternal, death. Its sting is sin; it is nullified when this is taken away, for it is then no longer a denial of life and immortality. There remains but the form of death, until this also is annihilated and death is no more (Rev. 21: 4: 'death shall exist no more, etc.')". (Wiesinger.) This death he abolished, or made of no effect: 1. By the new spiritual life he imparts to those who believe on him, through which sin the "sting" of death is destroyed (Eph. 2: 1); and as the result of which the act of dying is to the Christian no longer death, but only the passing into a new and higher life with Christ. (John 11: 26; Rom. 8: 2, 38; 2 Cor. 5: 6-8; Heb. 2: 14.) 2. By his own triumph over

11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

12 For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed; for I know whom I

11 tality to light through the gospel, whereunto I was ap-  
12 pointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher. For  
the which cause I suffer also these things: yet I am  
not ashamed; for I know him whom I have believed,

1 Gr. herald.

death in his resurrection and glorification, which was the type and pledge of a like triumph of his people, when they also shall rise in his image, with bodies made like unto his glorious body, and "there shall be no more death." (1 Cor. 15:26, 50-57; Phil. 3:21.) The destruction of death, which is accomplished in Christ the Head, is here spoken of as if already accomplished in his Body, the church. (Col. 3:3, 4.) **And hath brought life and immortality to light**—or, *revealed, by throwing light thereon, life and incorruption.* Before obscure, hidden amid shadows, his appearing illuminated them. Compare 1 Cor. 4:5. 'Life and immortality,' or, the incorruptible, imperishable life, had been, indeed, already adumbrated in the Old Testament; but Christ, in his teachings, and especially in his life, death, resurrection, and glorification, lighted up, illuminated, what was before only dimly seen, and brought it forth, as into the blaze of the noonday sun. The full meaning of life and immortality is seen only in Christ, as now he, the God-Man, sits glorified on the throne of the universe. 'Life' is here the new spiritual life imparted by "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," when the soul, before "dead in trespasses and sins," is quickened (Rom. 8:2, 6; Eph. 2:1); and the indwelling of "the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead" within the believer is the pledge of the ultimate resurrection and incorruption of his body. (Rom. 8:10, 11.) 'Immortality,' or imperishability, is an attribute of the 'life' which, already existing in the Christian, shall at last pervade and possess his whole nature, body and soul. (Rom. 2:7; 1 Peter 1:4.) The work of Christ, at his appearing on earth, is thus expressed in its grandest manifestation of power. On the one hand, it destroyed death, the fearful penalty of sin, in all its effects, alike in the soul and the body; on the other, it revealed life, in all the fullness of its blessing, permeating, enriching, ennobling the whole being, spiritual and bodily, and at last transforming the man, in his whole nature, into the likeness of the glorified God-Man. "Death results from the falling away of the

creature from God, and in its development includes in itself moral weakness (*ἀσθετικά*), corruption (*διαφθορά*), and the endless ruin (*ἀπώλεια*) of soul and body. *This death process Christ has made of no effect by the interposed life process*, first of all in his own person, then, as a result therefrom, in those who personally unite themselves with him." (Beck.) **Through the gospel**—the instrument through which, as Christ is the agent by whom, 'life and immortality' are brought to light, or revealed to man.

**11. Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.** Compare 1 Tim. 2:7, where the same expression is used. There, however, it is connected with the assertion of his authority in the gospel, but here with a statement of the sufferings endured in preaching the gospel. 'Of the Gentiles'—omitted in the Sinaitic and Alexandrian manuscripts, as well as in Cursive 17, and in Revised Version; but probably to be retained, as sustained by all other manuscript authority [N<sup>o</sup> C D E F G K L P, Syriac, Coptic, etc.—A. H.], and as here important to the sense.

**12. For the which cause**—that is, because I was appointed to this office, and am fulfilling it, especially as an apostle to the Gentiles. (Acts 22:21; Eph. 3:1.) **I also suffer these things;** namely, the suffering connected with his persecution and imprisonment. (Ver. 8, 15.) It was the very calling he had received from God as an apostle to the Gentiles, which proved the occasion of his sufferings. **Nevertheless I am not ashamed.** Though thus suffering, he had lost none of his boldness in proclaiming Christ and his gospel; and he cites his own example, in order to awaken in Timothy like courage and endurance for the Master. (Ver. 8.) **For I know whom I have believed**—or, *on whom I have fixed my trust.* The reason he is not ashamed, he knows God his Saviour, God in Christ, whom he has trusted; and this knowledge frees him from all doubt and fear. "I know what a faithful, promise-keeping God he is. (2:13.) It is not, I know how I have believed, but I know

have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

and I am persuaded that he is able to guard<sup>1</sup> that which I have committed unto him against that day.  
13 Hold the pattern of<sup>2</sup> sound words which thou hast heard from me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.  
14 That good thing which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit who dwelleth in us.

\* 1 Or, that which he hath committed unto me. Gr. *my deposit*. . . . . 2 Gr. *healthful*. . . . . 3 Gr. *The good deposit*.

WHOM I have believed—a feeble faith may clasp a strong Saviour.” (Fausset.) The character of God, especially as he is revealed in Christ, is the ultimate ground of Christian trust; and the more perfectly that character is apprehended in any soul, the more absolute and complete will be its reliance on him and its rest in him. (1 Sam. 30:6; Hab. 3:17, 18; Rom. 5:11.)

**And am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him**—literally, *my deposit* (*την παραθήκην μου*). Paul had committed to God in Christ his whole being, body, soul, and spirit, with all his interests for time and eternity. God is here the trustee with whom he has deposited for safe keeping his temporal and eternal salvation and welfare; and the ground of his confidence is the omnipotence of God. He is able to keep it. “God deposits with us his word, we deposit with God our spirit.” (Grotius.) (Luke 23:46; 1 Thess. 5:23; 1 Peter 4:19.) Thus most interpreters. Some, however, interpret the “deposit” as the “office of preaching the gospel,” which God had committed to Paul, as ver. 14; an interpretation less congruous with the context, in which he is speaking of the trust he himself has reposed in God, and one which is by no means required by ver. 14, since *deposit* (*παραθήκη*) is a general term, and need not designate the same deposit in both places. **Against that day**—the final day, the day of judgment, when “the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” Not simply *until that day*, but *unto, with reference to, for that day*. What has thus been intrusted will be kept safe, unimpaired, for the needs and the blessedness of that day. (4:8; Matt. 13:43; Rom. 8:18-23; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; James 1:12.)

**13-18. ADMONITION TO AN UNSWERVING ADHERENCE TO THE APOSTLE'S DOCTRINE, AND FIDELITY TO THE MINISTERIAL TRUST.**—1. Timothy is urged to hold the health-giving doctrine of the gospel, as received from the apostle, in the faith and love of

Christ, and to guard, by means of the indwelling Spirit, the sacred trust of the ministry. (13, 14.) 2. This admonition is enforced (*a*) by way of warning, in that certain Asiatics, when at Rome, had turned away from the apostle, especially Phygellus and Hermogenes; and, by way of encouragement, in the example of Onesiphorus, who, regardless of danger, had sought him out and cheered him in his prison; for which mercy shown to the apostle, he invokes God's mercy on him at the final day. (15-18.)

**13. Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.** The word translated in the Common Version *form* (*ὑποτύπωσις*) is rendered (1 Tim. 1:16) *pattern*, designating that which was intended as a model, exemplar. It refers here to the instruction, the general system of truth which Timothy had received from Paul; not, however, as a mere dead form of words, but “as a living expression of things, as if they were visibly presented to the eye.” (Calvin.) This living outline of truth, taught, not in words of man's wisdom, but in the wholesome, health-imparting words of the Spirit, and imprinted as an image on the mind of Timothy, he is to hold there, alike in substance and form, uneffaced and undistorted by “questions and strifes of words.” “What St. Paul had delivered to Timothy was to be to him a pattern and exemplar to guide him.” (Elliott.) ‘In faith and love’—the sphere, or element, in which he is to hold this system of truth. It is to be held, not barely in the reason, as if only an intellectual conception, but rather in the heart, as an object of faith and love, and that the love which is inspired by Christ Jesus. His theology is to be the theology of the heart, vitalized and spiritualized in the atmosphere of Christian faith and love. The truths of the gospel are clearly apprehended and firmly held only as they live and glow in the heart. (1 Tim. 5:5, 6, 19.)

15 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.

16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

**14. That good thing which was committed unto thee—or, that excellent deposit.** The same word as in ver. 12, “that which I have committed unto him”; but there it denotes a deposit intrusted by Paul to God—his soul, with all its priceless interests; while here it is a deposit intrusted by God to Timothy—the everlasting gospel, with all its precious promises and hopes for men. The exhortation is, then, that he guard or keep sacredly that priceless trust by holding the gospel in its purity and proclaiming it with all fidelity.

**Keep by (means of) the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.** This sacred deposit he is to guard, not by his own power, but by the power of the Holy Spirit, who dwells in all believers and who alone can enable the Christian minister to guard this holy trust of the gospel. The indwelling Spirit is everywhere represented as the source of spiritual life and power. See Zech. 4:6; Luke 12:12; John 14:17, 26; Acts 1:8; 4:31; Rom. 8:26; 1 Cor. 12:7-10; Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 3:16. “As if he had said, I do not ask from thee more than thou canst; for what thou hast not from thyself the Spirit of God will supply to thee.” (Calvin.) “What Paul says of the Holy Ghost as *indwelling* within the believer, refers us to the highest blessing of the New Covenant, in which the Holy Ghost is the immanent, vital principle of all the redeemed. During the Old Covenant, he overshadowed momentarily individual, holy men of God; in the New, he abides perpetually in the heart of each Christian.” (Van Oosterzee.)

**15. This thou knowest that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me.** Who these persons were we have no means of knowing, but probably they were Christians from Proconsular Asia, who had come to Rome, but, terrified by the peril in which Paul stood, had avoided him, shrinking from recognition as his disciples and friends, and leaving him in his prison unvisited and uncomforted, lest they also should come under persecution. This neglect of him in his bonds was, doubtless, all the more

15 This thou knowest, that all that are in Asia turned away from me; of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. The Lord grant mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus: for he oft refreshed me, and

keenly felt by the apostle, since some of them were probably converted under his ministry when in Asia. It has been supposed that they came to Rome as witnesses in Paul’s behalf on the trial; but, appalled by the danger in which he stood, had refused to appear and testify before the Imperial Court. Such a fact is touchingly alluded to by Paul. (4:16.) Their desertion of him was already, in some way, known to Timothy; but the apostle mentions it, as well as the noble fidelity of Onesiphorus, as an incentive to fidelity in Timothy, and especially as a cogent reason for hastening his coming to Rome to the help of his aged, but now deserted, father in the gospel. ‘Asia’ designates the Roman province of that name on the western coast of Asia Minor, which included Mysia, Phrygia, Lydia, and Caria. **Of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes**—mentioned by name, either because more prominent than the rest and better known to Timothy, or because their relations to the apostle were of a special character, rendering their desertion of him a more aggravated offense. We have no other mention of them.

**16. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus.** In contrast with those of Asia, he now presents, as an incentive to Timothy, the noble conduct of Onesiphorus, a resident of Ephesus (4:19), who, when at Rome, instead of shrinking from the danger, had taken special pains to find the apostle and extend practical sympathy. **For he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain.** He had with all courage brought comfort of mind and body to the apostle in his prison, and this, not once only, but often. “Next to suffering for the sake of the gospel, the grandest thing is to support the persecuted against the world, to incur danger for them, as Jerome for Huss, as Frederick the Wise for Luther. Jesus recognizes that as done unto himself. (Matt. 19:40, 41.)” (Heubner.) See Heb. 10:32-34. ‘My chain’ may indicate that Paul—in this second imprisonment, as in the first—was bound to a soldier by a chain. (Acts 28:20; Eph. 6:20.)

17 But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day; and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

17 was not ashamed of my chain; but, when he was in Rome he sought me diligently, and found me (the Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord in that day); and in how many things he ministered at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

## CHAPTER II.

THOU therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

1 Thou therefore, my child, be strengthened in the

**17. But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.** Among the multitude of prisoners at Rome from all parts of the empire, it might be no easy task to find Paul; but Onesiphorus persisted in the search till he found him, although the hazard of such a search and of identifying himself with such a prisoner must have been extreme, during this fearful persecution of Christians in the last days of Nero. The fact that it was not easy to find Paul shows that this is a different imprisonment from that described in Acts 28:30, when he "dwelt in his own hired house, and received all that came to him, preaching the kingdom of God . . . no man forbidding him"; for then he must have been known to all the Jews in Rome, as well as to many others. 'Very diligently'; the Sinaitic and Vatican manuscripts, have here, not the comparative, but (*επονδαίως*), *diligently, zealously*, which is probably the true reading.

**18. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.** 'The Lord grant' had doubtless already become a formula of invocation; hence the repetition of Lord in immediate connection. The kindness which the aged and imprisoned apostle himself could never repay, he asks that the Lord may reward by bestowing mercy on his faithful friend in the day of judgment, in accordance with Matt. 5: 7; 10: 42; 25: 34-40; for he was indeed "sick and in prison," and Onesiphorus "visited" him. Roman interpreters, from the mention of "the house of Onesiphorus" (ver. 16; 4: 19) have inferred that he was not himself living at the time this Epistle was written, and have used this passage as an argument for prayers in behalf of the dead. But the assumption of Onesiphorus' death is wholly gratuitous; the utmost that can legitimately be inferred from the absence of salutation to him is that Paul, knowing the plans of Onesiphorus' journey, did not suppose that he would have reached Ephesus at

the time this Epistle was received, and therefore sent salutation to his household rather than to him. In any case the prayer does not ask deliverance from purgatory, as Romish prayers for the dead, but that "he may find mercy of the Lord in that day," the day of final Judgment. "This prayer shows how much richer a recompense awaits those who, without expectation of earthly reward, perform kind offices to the saints, than if they received it immediately from the hand of men." (Calvin.) **And in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus thou knowest very well.** The Greek has the comparative *better*, not the positive. (See Winer's New Testament Grammar, section 35,4, Thayer's edition.) The thought is not barely of the personal service rendered by him to Paul at Ephesus; but, in general, of the service he had done the Christian cause there, of which Timothy from his residence there had even better knowledge than the apostle himself. What Onesiphorus had done for Paul at Rome was, therefore, only one instance in a life marked throughout by deeds of self-sacrificing faith and love. 'Unto me,' in the English and Latin versions, but wanting in the Greek; the expression, therefore, indicates the general kindness and beneficence of his conduct in the church.

**Ch. 2:** This chapter is filled with exhortations and counsels founded on the preceding exhibition of Timothy's duties and dangers, and adapted to incite him to courage and fidelity in his ministerial office.

**1, 2. NECESSITY OF BEING FILLED WITH POWER BY THE GRACE IN CHRIST—especially in view of the duty of the ministry to transmit the gospel unimpaired to faithful men who shall be competent to teach others also. **Thou, therefore, my son (child), be strong.** In view of the above examples (1: 11-18) as warned, on the one hand, by the**

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

2 grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be

defection of all them "that are in Asia," and as inspired, on the other, by the faith and courage of Paul and the fidelity of Onesiphorus, be thou strengthened, or filled with power, that thou mayest be faithful. Not, 'be strong,' but either the passive voice, *be strengthened*, or the middle, *strengthen thyself*. Compare 1:7. God has given us the spirit of *power*. (Rom. 4:20; Eph. 6:10.) The manner in which this strength is to be obtained is set forth. (Eph. 6:11-20.) **In the grace**—grace is here the inspirling element, the spiritual atmosphere, in which the Christian soul exists, and from which, as a vitalizing principle, the soul derives strength. He is to find strength, to be filled with power for work and conflict, by drawing it from the grace in Christ, the quickening, empowering element in which a Christian lives. (2 Peter 3:18.) "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." **Which is in Christ Jesus**—the grace which is only in him, and which he imparts to all who are in living union with him, as the vine imparts the life and fruit-power to the branches abiding in it. (John 15:4,5.) Being '*strong* in the grace that is in Christ Jesus' may be understood—1. In opposition to the weakness of grace. Where there is the truth of grace, there must be a laboring after the strength of grace. As our trials increase, we have need to grow stronger and stronger in that which is good; our faith stronger, our resolution stronger, our love to God and Christ stronger. 2. In opposition to our being strong in our own strength. 'Be strong, not confiding in thy own sufficiency, but in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.' Compare Eph. 6:10. "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." When Peter promised to die for Christ rather than deny him, he was strong in his own strength; had he been strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, he had kept his standing better. (Henry.)

**And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses.** The 'witnesses' here are probably the elders and others who were present at Timothy's ordination, and who listened to, and participated in, Paul's solemn charge, in committing to him the gospel and the ministerial office. The

'things heard' are the fundamental truths of the gospel, an outline of which, it is possible, Paul presented on that occasion. (1:13.) Thus most interpreters. Others refer 'witnesses' to the believing multitudes who, with Timothy, had at different times listened to Paul's preaching, and who by their faith had attested the truth of the doctrines proclaimed. Thus Van Oosterzee, Fairbairn, Conybeare. In any case, the word 'witnesses' implies that those thus designated concurred in the things spoken by Paul, in such sense that their very presence was an impressive attestation and emphasis of them. **The same commit thou**—or, *these deliver thou in trust*, as a precious deposit. (1:14.) **To faithful men**—not only believing, but faithful men—men worthy of the trust. **Who (such as) shall be able to teach others also**—that is, teach other faithful, or trustworthy men, who in turn shall be put in trust with the gospel. The thought is, that from age to age, in accordance with Eph. 1:14, Christ will raise up and qualify men for the ministerial office, to whom the gospel is to be handed down unimpaired, "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." "The true keeping of the deposit entrusted to thee will involve thy handing it on unimpaired to others, who may in their turn hand it on again. But in order to this, thou must be strong in grace; thou must be a fellow-sufferer with me in hardships: thou must strive lawfully; thou must not be entangled in life's matters." (Alford.) Thus, also, De Wette, Wiesinger, Huther, Fairbairn. Other interpreters, as Van Oosterzee and Whitby, understand 'others' of the congregation, not of ministers.

Two things are here to be observed: 1. The marks of a true ministry, as here presented, do not consist in an outward succession from the apostles, and the imposition of a bishop's hands. On the contrary, they are found: (a) In the character of the men; they must be *faithful*, personally worthy of the high trust. (b) In what they preach; this must be the true, apostolic gospel, as taught by the apostle himself, and committed to Timothy to preach to others. (c) In their competency

3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

3 able to teach others also. <sup>1</sup> Suffer hardship with me, 4 as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who enrolled him as a sol-

1 Or, *Take thy part in suffering hardship, as, etc.*

for the work; they must be *able to teach others*. 2. The ministry have a distinct and solemn responsibility in the ordination of a minister. In setting apart to the sacred office, it is their duty to ascertain that the candidate proposed is *faithful*, possessing a character such as makes him worthy of the trust, that he holds the pure gospel as it is taught in Scripture, and that he has such ability and training as render him competent to teach this gospel to others. The selection of men for the pastoral office, does, indeed, belong to each church, as a congregation of believers; but if the men thus selected and presented for ordination are wanting in any of these fundamental qualifications, it is the plain duty of the presbytery to refuse to ordain. For, as ministers, made responsible for the transmission of a pure gospel to a pure and competent ministry, they are charged to 'commit the things,' the apostolic doctrines, only to 'faithful men,' such as shall be 'able to teach others also.' In the absence of these essential requisites in the candidate, the presbytery has no right to set a man apart to the sacred office, but is under solemn obligation to refuse to sanction his entrance on it. The Lord has thus doubly guarded the ministry from the intrusion of unworthy, heretical, or incompetent men, by requiring in church officers not only that they be selected by an act of the church as a congregation, but also that they be approved and set apart by an act of the presbytery. For the apostles, in the appointment of the seven, gave direction to "the multitude of the disciples": "Look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." (Acts 6:1-6.) This principle of appointment to office—election by the people, setting apart by the ministry—was ordinarily observed in the apostolic churches; in which, therefore, the ultimate responsibility of admitting to the ministerial office plainly devolved on the ministry itself. (Acts 13:1-3; 14:23; 1 Tim. 4:14; 5:22; Titus 1:5.) As at that period every church seems to have had a plurality of

elders, it had its own "presbytery," and thus it possessed within itself the full powers necessary for instituting and perpetuating its own ministry.

**3-13. EXHORTATION TO ENDURE WITH PAUL HARDSHIP FOR THE GOSPEL, WITH A STATEMENT OF THE SPIRIT AND MOTIVES WITH WHICH IT SHOULD BE ENDURED.**

**I. 3-7. ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE SPIRIT IN WHICH SUCH HARDSHIP IS TO BE MET.**—1. With unreserved devotion to Christ, as the soldier, who devotes himself wholly to the cause of him by whom he was enrolled. 2. With unshinking obedience to every duty, as the athlete, who contends in the games, shrinks from no requirement of the rules, however severe or painful, that he may win the crown. 3. With undiscouraged and unsparing toil, as the husbandman, who, through persistent toil, secures the first participation of the fruits in harvest. These illustrations, Timothy is exhorted to consider, assured that the Lord will give him understanding in all things.

**3. Thou therefore endure hardness**—or, as the Revised Version, *suffer hardship with me*; or, *take thy share in suffering*. He is not to shrink from the sufferings which must needs meet all faithful ministers, and which especially met the apostle himself. (1 Tim. 1:18; 6:12.) 'Thou therefore'—in the Common Version, but not found in the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, Ephraem, and other ancient codices. **As a good soldier of Jesus Christ.** This figure, presenting the Christian as a soldier, is one common with the apostle. See 1 Cor. 9:7; 2 Cor. 10:3-6; Eph. 6:10-20.

**4. No man that warreth (no soldier when on service) entangleth himself with the affairs of this life**—that is, with the business affairs of ordinary life. The Roman soldier was expressly restrained from this by the rules of the army. In applying the figure, however, we may not infer that the minister is forbidden to use a secular calling as a means of support, if need be; for Paul wrought as a tent maker. But he is to avoid absorption in

5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

6 The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.

7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

it, or complications in connection with it, such as may divert him in spirit from his higher, divine calling. It is not a secular occupation, but entanglement in it, which is forbidden. (1 Cor. 7:32.) Paul wrought in an earthly occupation, but his whole soul was absorbed in the one work of proclaiming Christ; the secular was incidental, only a means to the higher end. (Acts 20:24, 31-35.) 'Entangleth.' (2 Cor. 2:20.)

**That he may please him who hath chosen him to be (enrolled him as) a soldier.** The merely personal will and private interest of the soldier yield, in an absolute devotement, to the will and interest of the commander. In such a spirit should the minister conduct his life, with no separate, personal interest, but with absolute self-devotement to the will and service of Christ, seeking only to please him. (1 Thess. 2:4.)

**5. And if a man also strive for masteries**—or, *if also any athlete contend in the games*: referring to the well-known athletic contests in the Grecian games. (1 Cor. 9:24-27; Heb. 12:1.)

**Yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully**—that is, *according to the rules*. The rules of the games prescribed the time and manner of preparation, as well as the things to be observed in the contest itself; and these requirements taxed to the utmost the endurance and strength of the contestant, alike in the preparation and the struggle. He must be "temperate in all things," and "keep his body under and bring it into subjection." All this was cheerfully endured, in view of the prize, the crown which was thereby to be won. The minister of Christ, in like manner, is not to shrink from the hardships appointed in his course, but to endure them with all fortitude, in view of the crown of life at the end; since only through the endurance of the appointed toil and sufferings will that crown be won. (4:7,8.) "We may not dispense ourselves from this or that requirement of our vocation, nor fail, in conformity to our inclination, to encounter any peril or danger which it imposes; neither pleasure nor convenience must be our adviser, if we would win the crown." (Wiesinger.)

5 dier. And if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully. 6 The husbandman that laboureth must be the first to 7 partake of the fruits. Consider what I say; for the Lord shall give thee understanding in all things.

**6. The husbandman that laboureth (is he that) must be first partaker of the fruits**—that is, not he who, discouraged, has ceased to labor, but he who is laboriously at work in the field will be first in sharing the fruits at harvest. To him, as persistently toiling for the crop, belong, according to a fixed law of nature, the first, highest results of toil. So thou, the apostle would say, steadfastly laboring in preparing the soil and sowing the seed, wilt at the harvest, according to an assured law of God's kingdom, be first to partake of the glorious results; and not only wilt thou see a harvest at the end, but thou shalt be the richest partaker of it, since it is precisely the present toil and suffering which give capacity and meetness for the coming blessedness and glory. (Luke 19:17, 26; James 5:7.) "The right of first participation in the harvest belongs to him who is laboring in the field; do not thou, therefore, by relaxing this labor, forfeit that right." (Alford.)

**7. Consider what I say**—that is, seek to apprehend the true significance of these illustrations; enter into their real meaning. **And (for) the Lord (will) give thee understanding in all things.** The encouragement to seek an apprehension of the truth is that he need not depend on his own imperfect, erring faculties, but shall have the promised guidance of the Lord. (John 14:26; 16:13.) "To collect the sum of these illustrations: 'Do thou take thy share with me in suffering; it is the law and condition of success. The soldier on duty must deny himself all the advantages and endearments of civil and domestic life; the athlete in the games must not hope for the crown, unless he observes the stern laws of the training and the contest; that husbandman only who has endured the toil has a right to share the fruits.'" (Bible Com.) *For the Lord will give*—the reading found in the best manuscripts. [N A C\* D E F G, etc.—A. H.]

**II. 8-13. INCENTIVES TO THE ENDURING OF SUCH HARDSHIPS.**—1. The glorious object of his trust, Christ, risen and glorified, the royal Seed of David, exalted on the throne of universal power. 2. The example of the apos-

**8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead, according to my gospel:**  
**9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.**

the himself, who is enduring suffering even unto bonds as a malefactor, that God's chosen may obtain salvation with eternal glory, while yet the word of God, for which he suffered, was, notwithstanding, advancing in triumph. **3.** The sure results alike of enduring and of refusing such suffering; on the one hand, death with Christ insures life with him, suffering with Christ reigning with him; on the other, if any shall deny Christ he will deny them; if any are unfaithful, he remains faithful to his word, his unchanging truth rendering absolutely certain the fulfillment alike of his promises and his threatenings.

**8. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead—***Remember Jesus Christ as risen from the dead, of the seed of David.* The resurrection of Christ was not only the crowning proof of his Messiahship and of the truth of his gospel, but, above all, culminating in his glorification, it revealed him as the living, exalted, Almighty Redeemer; and it was as such that Timothy should think of him, as an incentive to suffering with him. That once suffering Saviour is not now in the tomb dead. Death had no power over him. He broke its bands, and now, as the reward of his suffering, he is living, glorified, invested with all power in heaven and earth. As he through suffering attained to eternal glory, so also shall those who suffer with him. “Remember Christ risen, so as to follow him. As he was raised after death, so, if thou wouldest share his risen life, thou must now share his death.” (Fausset.) ‘Of the seed of David’—a further description of Christ; the words standing in this position in the Greek. The resurrection and royal exaltation of Christ was the fulfillment of God’s promise to David. (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Acts 13:33-37; Rom. 1:3, 4.) He was the true Son of David, the Heir of all the glorious promises made respecting David’s throne and kingdom. Exalted to universal dominion, he took his seat on that heavenly throne, of which David’s was the humble earthly type; and, as we think of him thus invested with all power, it should inspire us to endure hardship with him and his cause. Possibly, also, the reality of

**8 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel; wherein I suffer hardship unto bonds, as a malefactor; but**

Christ’s human nature is here emphasized. As ‘of the seed of David,’ he had a true human nature, and passed through a real human life, with actual human sufferings. He “was tempted in all points like as we are,” and thus, “in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” (Heb. 2:9-18; 4:15.) This risen, glorified Christ is man, one with us, though thus exalted; and the thought of him, in his perfect fellowship and infinite sympathy with us, should nerve us to suffering with him. **According to my gospel.** A risen Christ, as the hope and inspiration of his church, was the constant teaching of the apostles. Before the sorrowing and persecuted believers they set forth the glorious array of ancient heroes of faith, “so great a cloud of witnesses,” and then bade their disciples “run with patience the race set before them, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb 12:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:15-20; 1 Peter 1:3.)

**9. Wherein (namely, in proclaiming the gospel) I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds.** Before, he has directed Timothy to Christ, the risen Saviour, as the inspiration to suffering for the gospel; now, as a second incentive thereto, he cites his own example. The wonderful catalogue of his sufferings for the sake of the gospel is twice given at length. (2 Cor. 6:4-10; 11:23-28.) It has no parallel in human history; and the apostle’s example, in this utter self-abnegation for the gospel, of which Timothy had been a constant personal witness, might well inspire in him a like heroic faith. These sufferings, which had attended his entire ministry, culminated in the *bonds* of his final imprisonment under Nero, in which he was held as a malefactor, a criminal, and which was probably the severest ordeal of his life. **But the word of God is not bound.** The apostle himself is bound; but he exults in the thought, here parenthetically expressed, that the word of God—that mighty word, originating with God, and made “quick and powerful” by his pres-

10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:

10 the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. Faithful is the saying: For if we

1 Or, saying; for if, etc.

ence therewith—is not bound. With irresistible, divine energy it is advancing in its career of triumph, even while its defenders suffer imprisonment and martyrdom. Men die, but Christ and his gospel live and triumph through the ages; and this thought is to Paul, even amid the defection of friends and the rage of foes, a fountain of joy and hope. (Acts 20:24; 21:13.) "The teacher was bound, but the word was flying abroad; he dwelt in a prison, but his doctrine ran, as if endowed with wings, over all the world." (Chrysostom.)

**10. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.** 'Therefore' is to be construed with what follows. Compare

1 Tim. 1:16; Philem. 15. The reason he endures hardship is that the elect also—the whole chosen people of God, as well as those who are already partakers—may obtain salvation with eternal glory. They were "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4); therefore it is "the salvation which is in Christ Jesus." But though "the elect," they are appointed to be saved "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Tim. 2:13); and the preaching of the gospel, therefore, is necessary to their obtaining salvation. The apostle thinks of himself as God's messenger to carry salvation to the elect, whom God has chosen as his own people; and such a mission, in which the Lord himself laid down his life (John 10:11, 15), seems to him worthy of utter self-devotion, even unto bonds and death. See the same thought—Col. 1:24—where, speaking of himself, he says: "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." "Next to the salvation of our own souls, we should be willing to do and suffer anything to promote the salvation of others." (Henry.) 'Salvation' is conceived by the apostle as a present possession, already secured (Eph. 2:5), but this is to find its completion in 'eternal glory.' See

Rom. 8:14-25, where this thought is developed at length. Salvation, as now possessed by the believer, is only in its incipiency and potency: it will hereafter be developed in its completeness at "the adoption—to wit, the redemption of our body." Eternal glory is thus the grand goal of that salvation we have already obtained by faith. "Salvation begins with our regeneration, and is completed by our perfect deliverance, when God takes us away from the miseries of this mortal life, and gathers us into his kingdom. To this salvation is added the participation of heavenly, that is, divine, glory; and, therefore, in order to magnify the grace of Christ, he gave to salvation the name of 'eternal glory.'" (Calvin.)

**11. It is a faithful saying.** This refers to the following sayings, and is intended to emphasize them as containing weighty and indubitable truth. The rhythmical form of these sayings certainly suggests that they may have formed part of a hymn sung in the apostolic churches, or of a well-known, inspired utterance of one of the Christian "prophets" (Eph. 4:11); but of this the evidence is not certain. The plain design of their use here is to present, as a third motive for suffering in Christ's cause, the certain results—on the one hand, of enduring hardships with him; and, on the other, of shrinking from such hardships, and thus denying him. **For if we be dead (died) with him.** Faith in Christ united us with him in his death (Rom. 6:1-13; Col. 3:3; 1 Peter 2:24); but this union with him involves, not only a new relation to him, whereby through his death we have justification with God, but also a true and real fellowship with him in the spirit and objects of his death, so that in our present life we "know the power of his resurrection and have fellowship with his sufferings, being made conformable to his death." (Phil. 3:10; 2 Cor. 4:10; 6:9.) "Here, also, as in other places (Rom. 6:5; Eph. 2:5), a fellowship with Christ is set forth which is a complete fellowship of life, and, consequently, also a fellowship of fortune, not barely of thought

12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us;

13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

14 Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words, to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

12 died with him, we shall also live with him: if we endure, we shall also reign with him: if we shall deny him, he also will deny us; if we are faithless, he abideth faithful; for he cannot deny himself.

14 Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them in the sight of the Lord, that they strive not about words, to no profit, to the subverting of

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read God.

and feeling." (Beck.) **We shall also live with him.** This spiritual death with him, with its consequent "fellowship with his sufferings," and readiness to suffer, if need be, bodily death with him, is the sure pledge of life with him, not only present spiritual life (Rom. 6:8), but also the future resurrection life (Rom. 8:10, 11; Phil. 3:10-21). The necessary result of sharing his death now is the eternal sharing of his life.

**12. If we suffer (endure) we shall also reign with him.** "They who suffered with David in his humiliation were preferred with him in his exaltation; so it will be with the Son of David." (Henry.) The union with him in suffering, by enduring hardship and death for him, insures ultimate exaltation with him. See Matt. 19:27-29; Luke 22:20-30; Rom. 8:17; 1 Peter 1:7-9; 4:12-13; Rev. 1:10; 2:10; 3:21. How must this glorious truth, believably apprehended, have thrilled the souls of the confessors and martyrs of Christ in ages of persecution! But it does not come to them only. "Every Christian is under obligation to die with Christ through the mortifying of his own pleasures and desires, and to put to death his former sins through the martyrdom of penitence." (Question.) **If we deny him, he also will deny us.** The denial of him is put into the hypothetical form as something possible. Our Lord himself declared this with marked emphasis. (Matt. 10:33; Mark 8:38.) Such denial, as it involved a preferring of self above him, was itself proof that there had been no real death with him; and he will therefore say to such at the last day: "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity!" (Matt. 7:21.) The denial of Christ here intended is not the outcome of temporary weakness of faith, as in the case of Peter (Luke 22:54-62), but of the nature of the man, in whom self has never been crucified and Christ has never been enthroned.

**13. If we believe not—that is, are in a state of unbelief,** referring to the condition of those who, refusing to credit God's word,

are utterly without Christian faith, and, as the consequence, refuse to suffer hardship for Christ. The present tense denotes the habitual state; it does not refer, therefore, to those cases of temporary obscuration of faith, or of unfaithfulness, which may occur in the life of even a regenerate person. **He abideth faithful**—that is, to his word, which, being the expression of his immutable nature, can never be forfeited; whether it be his word of promise or his word of threatening, as just cited, 'If we deny him, he also will deny us.' Christ will never depart from that solemn word, which pledges him, at the last day, to own those who have owned him, and to deny those who have denied him. **He cannot deny himself.** As a being of perfect truth, he cannot prove false to his word. (1 Sam. 15:29; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18.) "Three things are impossible to God—to die, to lie, and to be deceived." (Augustine.) As the unchangeable Jehovah, his word of threatening is as sure as his word of promise: both rest on the immutable foundation of his eternal truth and faithfulness.

**14-26. DIRECTIONS TO TIMOTHY RESPECTING HIS SPIRIT AND CONDUCT AS A CHRISTIAN TEACHER, ESPECIALLY IN DEALING WITH HERETICAL AND DISTURBING TENDENCIES.**

**I. 14-18.** The apostle enjoins him: 1. To put the people in mind of the truths stated above (ver. 8-13), earnestly charging them to avoid strifes of words, which are both useless and pernicious. 2. To present himself to God approved, as a workman faithful and skillful in handling the word of truth. 3. To shun vain speculations, the tendency of which is ever to greater error and sin; a tendency which has already shown itself in the case of Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who thereby fell into a destructive heresy, affirming that the resurrection is already past, and who are thus subverting the souls of others.

**14. Of these things put them in remembrance**—that is, the things just mentioned. (ver. 8-13.) The pre-supposition is, that

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

15 them that hear. Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth,

16 But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed

1 Or, holding a straight course in the word of truth. Or, rightly dividing the word of truth.

they had already been taught them, but they needed to be reminded of them. **Charging them before the Lord**—as if in the presence of the Lord. (1 Tim. 5:21; 2 Tim. 4:1.) Instead of ‘the Lord,’ the Sinaitic, Ephraem, and other codices read *God*, a reading which is adopted by Tischendorf and by Westcott and Hort. **That they strive not about words**—an evil specially prevalent in the Ephesian Church. (1 Tim. 6:4.) They disputed about trifles, where the difference was one rather of words than of substance. Or the reference may be to the “vain jangling,” “profane and old wives’ fables,” and “endless genealogies,” in which they were so prone to indulge. Such a disposition to wrangle about words indicated a frivolous mind, destitute of the truth itself. **To no profit, but (tending) to the subverting of the heavens**—‘subverting,’ or destroying, the opposite of edifying. (2 Cor. 13:10.) Such word-strifes are not only wholly useless, but they also tend to the ruin of the hearers. They increase rather than remove doubts, while they stir up the bitterest passions.

**15. Study to shew thyself approved unto God.** Timothy, in contrast with the teachers above mentioned, is to be chiefly concerned to present himself to God as one ‘approved’; that is, one who has been tested, and has successfully passed the test. One ‘approved’ is the opposite of “reprobate” (Titus 1:16), or *a castaway* (1 Cor. 9:27), one who has been tested and has been thereby proved worthless. While careful, by the manifestation of the truth, to command himself to every man’s conscience in the sight of God, his chief thought should be, not of men’s approval, but of the approval of God. “He commands Timothy to keep his eyes fixed on God; as if he had said: Some aim at the applause of a crowded assembly, but do thou study to approve thyself and thy ministry to God.” (Calvin.) **A workman that needeth not to be ashamed**—one having no occasion to be ashamed; that is, at God’s judgment in the last day, when every man’s work will be tested, “of what sort it is.” (1 Cor. 3:9-15; 4:3-5;

Phil. 1:20.) The care of every minister, therefore, should be so to labor that in the day when his work shall be tried, it may receive God’s approval. The ‘workman that needeth not to be ashamed’ is the opposite, alike of those good, but careless men, whose work, built of “wood, hay, stubble,” “is burned,” though they themselves are saved, “yet so as by fire”; and of those “false apostles, deceitful workers,” whose work brings ruin, not only to others, but also to themselves. (2 Cor. 11:13-15.)

**Rightly dividing (handling aright) the word of truth.** The word translated ‘rightly dividing’ signifies *cutting straight*, as in laying out a road, or marking a furrow. (Prov. 11:5.) “Ploughing the furrows of spiritual tillage in a straight line.” (Theodoret.) Here it means rightly administering or handling. The reason he will not be ashamed is that he has rightly handled the word of truth. It was done in such manner as to meet the approval of God. He presented with fidelity and skill the solemn, glorious truths of the gospel, and pressed them on the consciences and hearts of men; refusing to occupy himself in frivolous strifes and questions, or in tortuous interpretations of God’s word. (2 Cor. 2:17; Gal. 2:14.) “Let him pass over nothing, let him add nothing, let him mutilate, tear in pieces, and wrest nothing; finally, let him diligently consider what the hearers are capable of receiving and what conduces to edification.” (Beza.)

**16. But shun profane and vain babblings**—stand aloof from, as one who shrinks from an object of disgust or terror. (1 Tim. 6:20; Titus 3:9.) ‘Profane babblings,’ empty discourses, having sound rather than substance, dealing with subjects which are trifling rather than serious and weighty. “The reference is to such controversies and doctrines as tended only to produce strife, and were not adapted to promote the edification of the church.” (Barnes.) **For they will increase unto more ungodliness**—that is, those who indulge in profane babblings will advance to a higher pitch of impiety. The necessary tendency of such is from bad to worse, ever de-

17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus;

18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

17 further in ungodliness, and their word will <sup>1</sup> eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have <sup>2</sup> erred, saying that <sup>3</sup>the resurrection is past already, and

<sup>1</sup> Or, spread. .... <sup>2</sup> Gr. missed the mark. .... <sup>3</sup> Some ancient authorities read a resurrection.

veloping into more pernicious errors and worse courses of conduct.

**17. And their word will eat**—literally, *will have pasture*, “the medical term for the consuming process of mortifying disease.” It is “an eating sore,” which feeds on, and thus spreads through, contiguous parts of the body. **As doth a canker** (*a gangrene*), “a tumor, when in the state between inflammation and mortification.” (Hippocrates.) The obvious thought is, that the tendency of profane babblings is to increased perversion of doctrine and deterioration of character, alike in the individual and in the whole church. Such teaching is like a cancer, whose roots are ever penetrating more deeply, and whose ravages at last waste and destroy the whole body. The apostle foresees that the errors of these false teachers will infect and spread through their hearers, and thus steadily work their moral destruction. “No man can safely hold a single error, any more than he can safely have one part of his body in a state of mortification”; and what is true of the individual soul is true also of the church as a body. Error is a diffusive poison, rapidly spreading through the whole body, and tending to vital decay and ultimate destruction. **Of whom are Hymenæus and Philetus.** The former is mentioned probably in 1 Tim. 1:20, where he is spoken of as having put away a good conscience and made shipwreck of faith. Of the latter, we have no further knowledge. These were men who illustrated in their career this tendency of profane babblings to increase to the worse; for, beginning in empty speculations, they had now advanced to the perversion of a cardinal truth of the gospel.

**18. Who concerning the truth have erred**—literally, *missed the mark*. (1 Tim. 1:6; 6:21.) **Saying that the resurrection is past already.** The denial of a future bodily resurrection, though a conspicuous feature among the Gnostics of the second century, had its roots in the apostolic age. The Sadducees, Therapeutæ, Essenes, and other sects rejected the doctrine of a resurrection; the Greek phi-

losophers scoffed at it as the dream of a madman (Acts 17:32), and within the church itself some at Corinth taught “that there is no resurrection of the dead.” (1 Cor. 15:12.) The form in which this great truth was here denied was, that the resurrection was already past. Possibly they regarded the promise of the resurrection as already fulfilled in the resurrection of some of the bodies of the saints, in connection with Christ’s rising from the dead (Mat. 27:53); but more probably they perverted Paul’s words (Rom. 6:4; Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12), where the believer is represented, in his regeneration, which is symbolized in baptism, as dying and rising with Christ; and thus, by a false spiritualizing, they interpreted the resurrection as occurring at conversion, when the soul rises out of the death in sin into the new life in Christ. “Death and resurrection were terms which had with these false teachers only a spiritual meaning and application; they allegorized the doctrine and turned all into figure and metaphor.” (Ellicott.) **And overthrow** (*are overthrowing*) **the faith of some.** (Titus 1:11.) The leaven of evil doctrine was spreading from them, with the danger that it might diffuse its destructive influence through the whole body. (1 Tim. 1:19, 20.) “It is true there is a spiritual resurrection, but from thence to infer that there will not be a true and real resurrection of the body at the last day, is to dash one truth of Christ in pieces against another. By this they ‘overthrew the faith of some,’ took them off from the belief of the resurrection of the dead; and if there be no resurrection of the dead, no future state, no recompense of our services and sufferings in another world, we are of all men most miserable. (1 Cor. 15:13-19.)” (Henry.)

**II. 19-21.** Timothy is not, however, to be discouraged when such perverters of the gospel appear in the church; for 1. The firm foundation of God—namely, his invisible, elect church—stands fast, since the inscription it bears attests that the Lord knows his chosen, and that these will not fall away into error and sin. 2. Such false and heretical teachers

19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

are to be expected in the church, just as in a large house, in addition to vessels of precious material for uses of honor, there are also vessels of base material for uses of dishonor. 3. His chief care, therefore, should be to purify himself, so as to be separate from these baser vessels, that he may be a vessel for honor, meet for the Master's use.

**19. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure.** Though error thus enters and spreads in the church, and the faith of some is thereby subverted, Timothy is not to despair: the cause of truth rests on God's firm foundation. This foundation is the true, invisible church, as composed of God's elect; "the congregation of the faithful, considered as the foundation of a building placed by God —house (*oikia*), spoken of in the next verse." (Alford.) The invisible church is the permanent, unchanging foundation of the visible: the one is 'sure' (*firm*), as composed of God's elect, who will never be moved from the truth (Eph. 2: 17-21); the other, built on it, will, in spite of all care, have in it corrupt members, who will be led astray from the faith. (1 Cor. 3: 9-15.) Heresies, in the divine plan, are permitted, in order to sift the church. Our Lord said, therefore: "It must needs be that offences come" (Matt. 18: 7), and the apostle warned the Corinthian Church: "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Cor. 11: 19). In this process of testing, God's chosen ones are revealed, in that they remain firm in the truth. **Having (seeing it has) this seal —inscription**, showing its ownership and destination. In all ages it has been the custom to place inscriptions on the door posts (Deut. 6: 9; 11: 20), on pillars and foundation stones (Rev. 21: 14), and on the corner stones or facades of public structures. These inscriptions generally consist of a brief, expressive form of words, indicating the origin, character, and purpose of the building. In somewhat similar way Christians are "sealed," or certified as God's people by the Holy Spirit, in "the fruits of the Spirit," or the new character-marks that he places on them. (2 Cor. 1: 22; Eph. 1: 13; 4: 30.) **The Lord knoweth them that are his.** The word 'knoweth'

19 overthrow the faith of some. Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from

often denotes that complete, intimate knowledge which includes the perception and recognition of the object by all the powers—intellectual, affectional, and spiritual; and thus, while it does not directly signify *love, approval, choice*, it still involves these ideas as implied. Thus, "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous" (Ps. 1: 6); "You only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos 3: 2). Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (John 10: 14, 25, 27); and at the Judgment he will say to the hypocrites: "I never knew you." (Matt. 7: 25; Gal. 4: 9; 1 John 4: 6-8). In these, and other passages, the word plainly denotes more than a mere intellectual knowledge: it points to such knowledge as involves love, approval, choice. Here, then, the firm foundation of God stands fast, because it consists of God's known or chosen saints. Objects of his choice, and brought by his Spirit into union with him, they will never prove faithless. Christ said: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." (John 10: 27, 28.) Others, in the ordeal of trial, will yield to temptation, but these will not fall away. (1 John 2: 19.) In the darkest period of the Old Dispensation, when even Elijah despaired, God's voice cheered his prophet, saying, "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal" (1 Kings 19: 18); and in all ages, amid the most wide-spread apostasies, this great truth—that God has a chosen people who will never apostatise and perish—has been the support and comfort of the discouraged servants of Christ. (Rom. 8: 35-39; 1 John 2: 18-20.) **And, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.** This is the other inscription on the 'sure (*firm*) foundation of God,' his elect church. The confession of Christ as Lord in itself involves the renunciation of unrighteousness. (Matt. 16: 16, 17; Luke 12: 8.) "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. 12: 3.) "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." (1 John 4: 2, 15.) A holy life, therefore, is an

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work.

20 unrighteousness. Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some unto honour, and 21 some unto dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, meet for the master's use, prepared unto

essential character mark of him who acknowledges Christ as Lord. Two grand characteristics thus distinguish the true people of God: they are his elect, and therefore are led and guarded by his Spirit; they acknowledge Christ the Holy One as their Lord, and therefore follow him in a life of holy obedience. They "are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." (1 Peter 1:5.) "God's part and man's part are marked out; God chooseth and knoweth his elect. Our part is to believe, and by the Spirit depart from all iniquity, an unequivocal proof of our being the Lord's." (Fausset.) Both inscriptions are supposed to allude to Num. 16: 5, 21, in which there are expressions nearly similar in form—the false teachers being compared to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and the true Christians to Moses and the faithful in Israel, who were not carried away in the rebellion, and remained safe when the earth opened and swallowed up the rebellious.

**20. But in a great house**—that is, the house built on this firm foundation; namely, the visible, professing church, which, in spite of all care, will contain false as well as true professors. (1 Tim. 3:15.) The apostle would not have Timothy be discouraged by the presence of heretical and corrupt men in the church, since this was to be expected. **There are not only vessels of gold and silver**—true Christians, in whom the rich grace of God dwells and whose character and life are adorned with the precious virtues of the Holy Spirit. **But also of wood and of earth**—false professors, in whom that grace is wanting and the character and life reveal an unregenerate nature. Thus "gold, silver, precious stones," the genuine and imperishable materials for God's building, are contrasted with "wood, hay, stubble," the false and perishable, as they will appear when he shall subject the work of his servants to his fiery test. (1 Cor. 3:12, 13.) A similar contrast between the genuine and the false among professing Christians is found in the parable of the wheat and tares, and of the net. (Matt. 13: 24-30, 47.) **And some to honour, and some to dishonour**—showing

the diverse use and destination of these vessels. Each of these classes, the true and the false, are consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, serving the purposes of God and doing his work, but with a service dissimilar in its nature and with a different destined end. "In the visible church, not only true Christians and faithful ministers are found, as willing instruments in the honorable work of glorifying God and promoting the good of men, but persons also of a different character, whose hypocrisy and iniquity are overruled, contrary to their intentions, to fulfill his righteous purposes, though to their own ruin and 'everlasting contempt.'" (Scott.)

**21. If a man therefore purge himself from these**—separate, keep himself distinct from these false, heretical professors, the "vessels of wood and of earth." He is thoroughly to purify himself, so as to be separate, both in character and association, from them. "All who consecrate themselves to the Lord must purge themselves from the filthiness of the ungodly." (Calvin.) Error and unrighteousness having, like gangrene, a tendency to self-diffusion, safety from it is only found in separation. (1 Cor. 5: 6-13.) The reference here is not to moral only but also to outward separation. Such must not be held in fellowship, in the association either of the church or of social life. (Rom. 16: 17; 2 Thess. 3: 6, 14; 2 John 10.) **He shall be a vessel unto honour**—a Christian adorning the doctrine and the church of God, and used for noble ends in the kingdom of Christ. **Sanctified**—separated, consecrated to the Lord. **Meet for the master's use**—possessed of a spirit and character adapted to the service of the Master. The figure of a household vessel, or utensil, is still present: he will be a vessel worthy to be used by such a Master. **And prepared unto every good work**—filled with all the Christian virtues, and thus in fervent sympathy with every good work, and fitted to engage in it. The thought is of a fully rounded Christian character, in living, holy sympathy with all that is true and noble and Christlike in word and deed. Such a life is described (2 Peter 1:5-11) adorned

22 Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

23 but foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient;

22 every good work. But flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them 23 that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and ignorant questionings refuse, knowing that 24 they gender strifes. And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach,

1 Gr. *bondservant*.

with all the Christian graces, and resulting at last in "an entrance ministered abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (3:17; Titus 3:1.)

**III. 22-26.** Timothy is, therefore, to flee youthful lusts and to follow the Christian virtues; to avoid useless questions and strifes, with gentleness instructing those who oppose, in hope that God may lead them to repentance, and that, thus coming to the knowledge of the truth, they may recover themselves from the snare of the devil.

**22. Flee also youthful lusts**—referring not only to sensual passion, but all the irregular desires and propensities belonging to earlier life, as self-conceit, pride, ambition, love of applause; "any impetuous passions to which the warmth of that age is prone." The apostle has especially in mind such as are the opposite of the after-named virtues. (1 Tim. 6:11.) **But**—only by avoiding such lusts will he be "meet for the Master's use and prepared for every good work." **Follow righteousness**—"moral rectitude, as contrasted with 'unrighteousness' (*ἀδικία*). (ver. 19)" (Alford.) **Faith, charity (love)**—the sources of true Christian character, from which flow all genuine virtues in the life. "The exciting of our graces will be the extinguishing of our corruptions; the more we follow that which is good, the faster and further we shall flee from that which is evil. Righteousness and faith and love will be excellent antidotes against youthful lusts." (Henry.) **Peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.** The minister is to "follow peace with all men" (Heb. 12:14); but his deepest, truest sympathy, fellowship, the peace of complacency, should be with true Christians—those who with singleness of heart call upon the Lord. "Call on the Lord"—a characteristic of the genuine disciple of Christ, and hence used as a descriptive designation. (Acts 2:21; Rom. 10:12; 1 Cor. 1:2.) "The lesson here comes out again, so often and in so many ways presented in these Pastoral Epistles, that a sound moral

condition is, above all things, essential to fitness for effective ministerial service in the divine kingdom. Other things may be more or less helpful, but this is indispensable. The peace spoken of is undoubtedly to be understood of peace in the closer sense—a state of inner harmony and agreeable fellowship; because it is such as is to be maintained with them that call on the Lord with pure heart." (Fairbairn.)

**23. But foolish and unlearned (ignorant) questions avoid**—rather, *the foolish, etc.*; namely, those which the false teachers debate. "Foolish (Titus 3:9) (ignorant) questionings," such as arise in an ignorant, undisciplined, ill-regulated mind, and are unworthy of serious attention. (Ver. 16; 1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7.) **Knowing (as thou dost) that they do gender strifes**—or, *Since thou knowest.* Such questionings, while having no useful end, tend to mere empty controversy, arousing the worst passions and breeding bitter enmities. Timothy was, therefore, to refuse to consider them. (1 Tim. 6:4; Titus 3:9.)

**24. And (but) the servant of the Lord.** The language is general, but the context shows that the minister of Christ is chiefly intended. **Must not strive.** The servant of the Lord must be like his Master, who did not "strive nor cry." (Matt. 12:19, 20.) The meaning is, he must not engage in useless strife, such as is here forbidden. It is his duty to "contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3); but he is not to exercise the spirit of a mere polemic, or to be a lover and seeker of contention. **But be gentle unto all men**—'gentle,' as opposed to *harsh, passionate.* His spirit and manner should evince tenderness, kindness, love; and this 'toward all men,' irrespective of parties and preferences. (1 Thess. 2:7.) **Apt to teach.** Here, as in 1 Tim. 3:2, the word includes not only skill in teaching, but also a disposition to teach. Instead of a harsh, imperious, dogmatic spirit in dealing with those who differ, the servant of Christ should be disposed to teach them, dealing with them through the

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

1 Or, instructing.....2 Gr. return to soberness.....3 Gr. taken alive.....4 Or, by him, unto the will of God. Gr. by him unto the will of him. In the Greek the two pronouns are different.

understanding by instruction, rather than exercising a coercive authority. "Ready to teach rather than to contend." (Ellicott.) **Patient** (under evil)—or, *patient of wrong*. The thought is, not only of wrong intentionally inflicted on us, but also of the stupidity, prejudice, misconstruction, and manifold weaknesses of men, which the minister must meet, and which often prove his severest trials. Under all these evils, especially under opposition, he is to be patient, forbearing, as was his Master.

**25. In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.** 'Meekness'—better, *gentleness*, in contrast with *harshness, violence*. The opposers referred to are probably those morally diseased persons who were full of useless questionings and restive under sound instruction in the plain, simple gospel. The spirit and conduct of such might easily irritate a pastor, and tempt him to the exercise of harsh authority, seeking to crush rather than instruct the opposer; and against this the apostle warns Timothy. He must not, even under such provocation, cease to be "patient of evil." Many interpreters, as Alford, Fairbairn, Beck, translate *correcting* instead of *instructing*, making the passage enjoin a disciplinary rather than a teaching act. Thus, also, the Revised Version. Without doubt, the Greek word has sometimes this use; but here the context seems to me to be clearly dehorting from the exercise of mere authority in such case, and urging rather to forbearing and kindly instruction. The more usual sense of the word, therefore, is here required. **If God peradventure will give them repentance.** This is the motive to such forbearing, kindly instruction; the hope that, through this means, God may lead them to a right state of mind. Note here, as always, vital religious error has its roots in sin; and in order to its removal there must be repentance, a change in the state of the heart. Note, also, repentance is the gift of God, resulting from the Holy Spirit's work on the soul (Acts 5:31);

25 forbearing, in meekness <sup>1</sup> correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth,

26 and they may <sup>2</sup> recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been <sup>3</sup> taken captive <sup>4</sup> by him unto his will.

and because it is God's gift, we are not to despair of any person, however unlikely his conversion may appear to human view. The case of Paul himself should show what a change may be wrought in even the most violent and stubborn opposer, when God gives repentance. But while repentance is God's gift, he gives it through appropriate means; we are, therefore, to be in earnest in seeking to lead men to it by patient instruction and persistent effort. **To the acknowledging of the truth.** The word translated 'acknowledging' (*επιγνωσις*) signifies the *full apprehension, the realization*, of the truth. Only through a change in the moral dispositions (*μετάνοια*) do men attain to the full knowledge, the believing apprehension, of the gospel.

**26. And that they may recover themselves** (literally, *may awake to soberness*) **out of the snare of the devil.** Such opposers have fallen into 'the snare of the devil,' having become deluded and bewildered, as in a drunken sleep, through error and sin; but awaking sober, they awake to righteousness, and escape out of the snare. The snare in which they had been caught was the error by which they became intoxicated; in awaking sober, therefore, they escape from the snare; namely, the intoxicating error. On the figure of awaking from error and sin as from a drunken sleep, compare 1 Cor. 15:34: "Awake to righteousness, and sin not." 'Snare.' Compare Eph. 6:11, "wiles of the devil"; 1 Tim. 3:7; 6:9. **Who are taken captive by him at his will**—or, *having been captured by him unto his will*. They had been ensnared by Satan, to the end that they might be subject to his will instead of God's will. He captured them that they might become, as in fact they did become, obedient to him instead of obedient to God. Thus wicked men are represented as under the inspiration and control of the Satanic will. They walk "according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2) The Revised Version, with

## CHAPTER III.

THIS know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false

some commentators, interpret 'unto his will' of God's will, and 'taken captive by him' of being taken captive by God's servant. Others understand the words, as Fairbairn paraphrases, "that they may return to soberness (so escape) out of the snare of the devil (by whom they had been taken captive) according to the will of him (God), who for this end sec-  
onds the efforts of his servants by giving the spirit of repentance and true enlightenment." The view above given, however, seems to me far simpler and more natural; and the difference in the two pronouns used in the Greek is no real argument against it, as examples clearly show that, without a change in the person indicated, there may be a change in the pronoun merely for the sake of emphasis. Thus here: "who have been taken captive by him" (Satan) (to bring them into subjection) "unto *his* will" (instead of God's will).

**Ch: 3 : 1-9. GRIEVOUS TIMES PREDICTED IN THE LAST DAYS.**—1. The cause of these is explained; it is the rise and dominant influence of men who are grossly immoral in character and life, while yet they have the outward form of godliness, even though they thus deny the power thereof. (2-5.) 2. The precursors of these are already present, and from them Timothy is warned to turn away. They are described as those who, by deceptive arts, are misleading weak and unstable women, drawing them into error and sin; and who, in withholding the truth, are like the Egyptian magicians that withstood Moses; which ungodly men they also resemble in the utter defeat that shall ere long meet them, when their impious folly will be publicly exposed. (6-9.)

**1. This know also.** Notwithstanding the hope just expressed in regard to the recovery of errorists, many evil men will arise in the church, who will never be reclaimed. **That in the last days.** This is the common designation in the Old Testament of the Messianic Age, the times after the advent of Christ. It is thus used in the New Testament to de-

1 But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affec-

signate the New Dispensation, this being the last period of human history. (Acts 2:17; 1 John 2:18.) Some refer it to the closing days of the Christian period, just prior to the second advent; but this is forbidden, at least as the exclusive reference, by the fact that the wicked men referred to are, in part, already present, and Timothy is exhorted to "turn away" from them. (ver.5.) The whole representation points to the immediate, as well as the remote future, as 1 Tim. 4:1. Probably such "perilous times" would more than once recur, and the last, occurring before the second advent, may prove the worst, in the wide extent and terrible character of its error and sin. This seems darkly intimated in Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:3; 2 Peter 3:3; Rev. 20:7. **Perilous (grievous) times will come**—or, *difficult times will set in*; that is, times hard to live in. The reference is probably the same as in 1 Tim. 4:1-3; but there the heretical side, the departure from the truth, is emphasized, while here the ethical side, the departure from morality, is specially described.

**2. For men shall be lovers of their own selves**—or *lovers of self*. The Greek has the article, *the men*, generic for men in general. Selfishness will be a general characteristic of the period. This trait is placed first, because, as the root and essence of all sin, it is the source of the other evil characteristics mentioned. **Covetous**—or, *lovers of money*; filled with a selfish greed for the accumulation of wealth. (Luke 16:14.) **Boasters, proud, haughty**—men of proud spirit, and supercilious bearing. **Blasphemers**—or, *defamers*; those who openly vilify, or speak evil of others. **Disobedient to parents**—a fonsal sin, the source and sign of a general disregard of authority. Refusal to yield obedience to this primal, natural authority tends to a reckless resistance of all rightful government, whether divine or human. **Unthankful**—destitute of gratitude for favors from God or man. (Luke 6:35.) **Unholy**—defiled with sin, irreligious.

**3. Without natural affection.** Bad men

accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good.

4 **Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;**

5 **Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.**

6 **For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,**

tion, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, 4 fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; 5 holding a form of godliness, but having denied the 6 power thereof: from these also turn away. For of these are they who creep into houses, and take captive silly women laden with sins, led away by divers

sometimes have warm affection for their own kindred; but these sink so low that even this common instinct of nature is destroyed. They become in this inferior to the beasts. **Truce-breakers**—rather, *implacable*; such as will not be appeased, resisting all overtures to reconciliation. **False accusers**—literally, *devils*; such as from malice accuse, or secretly slander others. **Incontinent**—*without self-control*; men of unbridled passions or appetites, who do not or cannot control their evil propensities. The noun is used (1 Cor. 7:5) “incontinency,” *inability of self-control*; here the adjective is the opposite of *temperate*; or, rather, *self-controlled*. (Titus 1:8.) **Fierce**—literally, *untamed, savage, brutal*. **Despisers (haters) of those that are good**—the opposite of Titus 1:8, “a lover of good men”; or possibly more general, *haters of that which is good*.

4. **Traitors ( betrayers)**—those who betray confidence or trust reposed in them; possibly referring to those who betrayed Christian brethren to persecutors. (Matt. 24:10; Mark 13:12.) **Heady (headlong)**—reckless, impetuous in passion, headlong in action. **Highminded**—or, *puffed up with conceit*. Self-conceit, like smoke, without substance, but puffed out into large volume, envelops and blinds them, distorting and magnifying their view of themselves as compared with others. (1 Tim. 3:6; 6:4.)

**Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God**—those who delight in fashion, frivolity, amusement, revelry, the pleasures of the world, rather than in religion and the service of God. (1 John 2:15; Rom. 16:18.)

5. **Having a form of godliness**—the outward semblance, or that appearance of piety which is found in a mere religious profession and the forms of public worship. They are not open apostates from Christianity, but professed adherents of Christ. **But denying the power thereof**—that is, by their spirit and conduct. They have the outward form. (Matt. 7:15-20.) Perhaps, like the Pharisees, they are very zealous for the form (Matt. 23); but they

have none of the living, saving, power of religion in the character and life. Their works belie their profession.

This passage must be compared throughout with Rom. 1:29-32, where many of the characteristics here ascribed to the false Christian are ascribed to the heathen, as indeed was natural; for sin, having its root in an inordinate self-love, everywhere tends in its development to the same false and corrupt features in the character and life. In both passages, it will be observed, these characteristics are ascribed, not to each individual, but to men in the mass (*the men*), as marked features in the general life. Here they are presented as striking and awful characteristics of the church in those *grievous times*; and, however dark and repulsive the picture thus sketched, the sad reality has more than once appeared in the professed church, in periods of religious declension, when the world has seen “a new heathenism under the name of Christianity.” **From such turn away.** Persons of the character above described had already appeared in the church; and Timothy is charged to deal with them, not as with those mentioned in 2:25, “in meekness instructing them,” but to ‘turn away’ from them, as men who had reached a stage of depravation where instruction is useless or impracticable. They must be avoided. (Prov. 9:7,8; 23:9; Matt. 7:6.)

6, 7. **For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women.** Probably those referred to were persons who, before embracing Christianity, had practiced magical arts. Men of this sort abounded everywhere in the apostolic age; and there were many of them at Ephesus. (Acts 19:9-24; 13:6; 19:13-19.) ‘Creep’; as serpents, or as wolves seeking their prey, in an insidious, stealthy manner. ‘Silly women’—a diminutive in the Greek, meaning *little women*, used contemptuously, and probably well rendered, *silly, foolish women*. “As Satan attacked the woman, and not the man, and beguiled Eve, and not Adam, so these, his in-

7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as theirs also was.

7 lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. And like as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also withstand the truth; men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be evident unto all men,

struments and emissaries, work themselves into the affections of the weaker vessel, and into the weaker sort of women, as the diminutive word here signifies." (Gill.) On such vain, frivolous, unstable women, these impostors sought, by stealthy and artful means, to exercise their power, leading them into error and sin, and holding them captive, as helplessly bound under the spell of their arts. Of these women, three descriptive statements are made. They are: 1. **Laden with sins**—as if sins were heaped up on them, so that they are burdened under them. Alford, however, suggests a different view: "Their consciences oppressed with sins, and in this morbid state they lie open to the insidious attacks of these proselyters, who promise them ease of conscience if they will follow them." 2. **Led away with divers lusts**—these lusts, or evil desires being the governing forces in their lives, controlling their conduct. Not alone sensual lust, but "the itch and desire after new teachers and new doctrines and practices"; the constant seeking for the sensational, or that which is last in fashion in preachers and churches. Self-gratification, rather than Christian principle, ruled their life. 3. **Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.** They were always learning, turning from one new doctrine to another, in the restless quest for novelty; but, thus unstable, and governed by their fickle lusts, they were never able to attain the real apprehension of the truth. "It is a remark as demonstrable as it is humiliating, that as the truth, so also error and sin have found ever a powerful support in the weaker sex. Compare 1 Tim. 2: 14. There lies in the womanly character the foundation, as for the highest development of the power of faith, so also for the highest revelation of the power of sin." (Van Oosterzee.) Compare Rev. ch. 17.

8. **Now (but),** such characters as these deceivers are to be expected, since they appeared even in the ancient period. **As Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses.** These names

are found in the Targum of Jonathan (Exod. 7: 11, 22), as those of the Egyptian magicians who attempted miracles before Pharaoh to offset the miracles of Moses. The Rabbinical writings have many legends respecting them; but the fact here referred to is attested by the Biblical record in Exod. 7, and there is no reason to doubt the tradition respecting the names of these sorcerers. **So do these also resist the truth.** They directly opposed the true gospel by setting up their magical arts in rivalry with the *charisms*, or gifts of the Spirit, as the old Egyptian sorcerers had done in the contest with Moses. Compare the cases of Simon and Elymas (Acts 8: 9; 13: 6); also the predictions of the coming of false teachers, who shall perform lying wonders in the last days. (Matt. 24: 24; 2 Thess. 2: 9; Rev. 13: 14, 15.) **Men of corrupt minds.** 'Mind,' "the human spirit viewed both in its intellectual and moral aspects." (Delitzsch.) (1 Tim. 6: 5; Eph. 4: 17-19.) The mind, the very faculty through which God communicates with man, is corrupted. The light within has become darkness. (Matt. 6: 23.) **Reprobate concerning the faith**—tested and proved worthless as to the faith in the truths of the gospel. (Titus 1: 16.) 'Reprobate,' compare Jer. 6: 30; Rom. 1: 28; 1 Cor. 9: 27; 2 Cor. 13: 5. They had received the gospel, but had proved themselves unworthy of it. "A corrupt head, a corrupt heart, and a vicious life usually attend and accompany one another."

9. **But they shall proceed no further.** In themselves they will grow worse, according to verse 13; 2: 16, as all error tends to increased corruption in him who holds it; but in their influence over others, they will not advance; for this will be checked by the exposure of their folly. Error is in its own nature weakness; it "is a palace of ice which at last must melt and tumble down necessarily, when but one ray of the sunlight of truth penetrates it." **For their folly shall be manifest to all men as theirs** (Jannes and Jambres) **also was.** 'Folly'—*senseless wickedness*; the ethical as well as the intellect-

10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, 10 as theirs also came to be. But thou didst follow my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, longsuffering,

ual aspects of their conduct are here characterized. The true character of these men and of their acts and doctrines would soon be fully exposed; just as, in the progress of the conflict, the folly and impotence of the Egyptian magicians was; when even they themselves were compelled to confess the utter failure of their magical arts, and, yielding the contest, they said of Moses' miracle, "This is the finger of God"; and when, in attempting to produce the "boils" on others, "the magicians could not stand before Moses, because of the boil, for the boil was upon the magicians." (Exod. 8:18, 19; 9:11.) It is evident that the men here referred to, after entering the church, had relapsed into the practice of their magical arts. (Acts 19:18, 19.) Like Simon, they had never really received the truth, but were "still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity"; and now, taking advantage of the superstition, which yet to some extent held its grasp on members of the church who but lately came out from heathenism, they used their corrupt and deceptive arts to pervert the principles and faith of the weak, in order to secure the gratification of their own sensual lusts and the accumulation of wealth. They craftily sought access to the more frivolous and unstable among the female members, to lead them astray, who doubtless all the more readily yielded to their arts in that, before entering the church, they had been believers in magic, and had lived under its manifold forms of deception.

**10-17. EXHORTATION TO STEADFASTNESS IN THESE PERILS.**—To this he is incited: 1. By the remembrance of his faith, as shown, at his conversion and entrance on the ministry, when, inspired by the teachings and life and heroic sufferings of Paul, with the Lord's deliverance out of them, he became an ardent follower of the apostle. (10, 11.) 2. By the fact that persecution is not a strange thing, but must be expected by all those who resolve on a life of Christian piety; while, also, evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse. (12, 13.) 3. By the confidence he reposes in those from whom he received the gospel, and by his early training in the Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation. (14, 15.)

4. By the sure guidance and help he has in Holy Scripture, (a) as divinely inspired, (b) as useful to give complete fitness for all duties and dangers, and for every good work. (16, 17.)

**10. But thou**—in contrast with these deceivers. **Hast fully known**—or, *didst follow* as a disciple with full sympathy and approval. Not, "hast fully known," as in the Common Version, but according to the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, and Ephraem Codices, with cursive MS. 17, *didst follow*. The reference is to Timothy's conversion, of which the teaching and life and sufferings of the apostle seem to have been the means; and in connection with which, inspired by the lofty qualities in Paul, he became his enthusiastic and devoted follower. He had not only fully known Paul's teachings and spirit and life, but, with hearty approval and sympathy, had followed him as in these respects his model. **My doctrine**—or, *teaching*—the doctrines or principles Paul had taught, including also probably his spirit and methods in teaching. These had been to Timothy the models of doctrine after which he had patterned his instruction—"guiding stars, as it were, which he followed." **Maner of life**—course of conduct, or principles of life. Timothy had modeled his life after Paul's, heartily adopting the same self-abnegation and consecration to Christ and his gospel. **Purpose**—referring to the steadfast purpose in Paul to devote himself without reserve to the ministry of the gospel, to which Christ had called him. (Acts 20:24; 21:13, 14; 1 Cor. 2:2; 2 Tim. 4:7.) **Faith**—here, if anywhere in these epistles, in the sense of *fidelity, faithfulness*; but it is more probably to be taken in the usual sense of belief or trust in God's word, as an actuating principle in the life. **Longsuffering**—toward opposers and erring brethren. (Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12; 2 Tim. 4:2.) **Charity**—or, *love*; here, perhaps, love toward men, *charity*. (1 Cor. 13.) **Patience**—patient bearing of evil, without swerving from the temper and faith of the gospel. (Rom. 2:7.) These things in Paul had, in Timothy's earlier life at Lystra, inspired his youthful love and devotion, and led him to consecrate himself to a like service of Christ. The apostle, there-

**11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.**

**12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.**

**13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.**

<sup>1</sup> Or, *steadfastness.*

**11 love,<sup>4</sup> patience, persecutions, sufferings; what things befall me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: and out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But, evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse**

**fore, reminds him of this to strengthen his faith and preserve him steadfast in coming trial, in the hope that, as at his conversion, so now, Timothy would faithfully follow him, as he followed Christ. In like manner, Paul elsewhere refers to his own spirit and life and work as an example, both as a model of ministerial life and as an incentive to personal holiness. (Acts 20:18-35; 1 Thess. 2:1-12.) Thus also, he reminds the Hebrew Christians of their earlier devotion to Christ and readiness to suffer for his sake, as an incentive to fidelity in present and impending trials. (Heb. 10:32-35.)**

**11. Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me.** He now cites especially the persecutions and sufferings which met him at the time of Timothy's conversion, and in full view of which, with the Lord's deliverance of him out of them, Timothy had consecrated himself to the ministry. **At Antioch**—in Pisidia, whence Paul was driven by persecution. (Acts 13:50.) **At Iconium, at Lystra**—cities of Lycaonia, where he met with the most bloody violence. (Acts 14:5-19.) Elsewhere he gives an extended catalogue of his persecutions and sufferings, many of which Timothy had doubtless witnessed (2 Cor. 11:23-28); but here he cites only those which had been connected with Timothy's conversion and self-devotion to the ministry as an assistant to the apostle. The fearful scene in Lystra, when Paul was stoned and left for dead, the young disciple had probably himself witnessed; while the story of Paul's heroic faith and fearless confession of Christ in the other cities was doubtless widely known in all that region, and inspired the heart of the youth to endure, with like faith and courage, similar sufferings, if need be, in the service of the Lord. **What persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.** As an encouragement to Timothy, to strengthen him for the coming perils, he not only recalls these early persecutions, in full view of which he had given himself to the work, but also the marked divine deliverance from them. The preservation of Christ's faithful servant had been even more conspicuous than his sufferings. Compare 4:17, 18. "As if he had said: Thou hast known by experience that God has never forsaken me, so that thou hast no right to hesitate to follow my example." (Calvin.)

**12. Yea, and all that will live godly in (fellowship with) Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.** 'That will'—have the earnest, steadfast purpose; are resolved to live godly. 'In Christ Jesus'—the inspiring source and the sphere of a truly pious life. Compare Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21. No man lives a life of true godliness, except in virtue of a living union by faith with Jesus Christ. (John 15:4, 5.) He intimates that Timothy, instead of being surprised and cast down by persecution, should expect it as the natural and common lot of those who resolve on a life identified with Christ. The enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman develops itself in every age and under manifold forms. (Gen. 3:15.) He that is born of the flesh persecutes him that is born of the Spirit. (Gal. 4:29.) The words of Christ to his disciples remain forever true: "The servant is not greater than his lord; if they have persecuted me they will also persecute you." (John 15:19, 20; 16:33; Matt. 10:16-25.) It is the duty of the Christian so to teach and so to live as to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God (2 Cor. 4:2), and thus compel the inward respect of even wicked men for his sincerity and consistency; but a decided, earnest Christian spirit and life will always evoke some form of opposition from the ungodly world. The radical antagonism of the world to Christ is as real and deep now as when men cried: "Crucify him! crucify him!" although it may not always and everywhere find the same form of expression.

**13. But**—in contrast to those who 'live godly in Christ Jesus.' **Evil men and seducers**—literally, *sorcerers, or, magicians.* (ver. 8.) **Shall wax worse and worse**—ad-

**14** But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*;

**15** And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

**16** All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

**14** deceiving and being deceived. But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of <sup>1</sup>whom thou hast learned **15** them; and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ **16** Jesus. <sup>2</sup>Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction,

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *what persons*. . . . . <sup>2</sup> Or, *Every scripture is inspired of God, and profitable.*

*vance in the direction of the worse.* See ver. 1, 9, above. "There the diffusion of the evil was spoken of; here its *intensity*." (Alford.) Though the spread of the evil may be repressed by the early exposure of these men, yet the men themselves will go from bad to worse, according to the natural tendency of error and sin. **Deceiving and being deceived.** Sin is here its own punishment; for "living in an element of deceit, they come to be themselves deceived." "Deception always involves self-deception." (De Wette.) This is an inexorable law of our moral being; he who perverts the truth, in the very act destroys his own power to see the truth, and opens his soul to the influx of error.

**14. But continue thou**—in contrast with these deceivers. **In the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of.** Though deceivers will deceive themselves and others, let them not deceive thee; but do thou adhere firmly to the truths thou hast been taught and the convictions thou hast formed. Let nothing turn thee from the gospel thou hast believed. See John 8:31, 32; Eph. 4:14; Heb. 3:14; 5:12; 10:38, 39. **Knowing** (as thou dost) **of whom thou hast learned them.** According to the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, and some other codices, the pronoun 'whom' is here plural, and the reference, therefore, is to his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois (1:5), but probably not excluding the apostle himself. Some editors, however, with Ellicott, retain the singular pronoun 'whom,' making the exclusive reference to Paul. In either case the thought is of the reliable source of his knowledge; he had received it from those entitled to his highest confidence.

**15. And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures**—the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which these pious persons had from earliest childhood taught him. 'From a child'—or, from infancy, the word *βρέφος* signifying very early age. The Jewish

children were taught the Scriptures by memorizing them as soon as they could speak. Rabbi Judah says: "The boy of five years of age ought to apply to the study of the Sacred Scriptures." "The piety of Timothy is traced by the apostle to the fact that he had been early taught to read the Scriptures, and a great proportion of those who are in the church have been early made acquainted with the Bible." (Barnes.) **Which are able to make thee wise unto salvation.** 'Which are able.' They are now and always able; "the present is used to denote the permanent, enduring property of the Holy Scriptures." (Ellicott.) Not, however, that salvation resides, as a magical power, in the mere words of Scripture, or even in its truths; but rather that the truths of Scripture present to the mind the true objects of faith, and are the medium through which the Holy Spirit exerts his renewing, saving power. (1 Peter 1:23; John 17:17.) **Through faith which is in Christ Jesus**—that is, the faith which rests on Christ. It is through this faith that the truths of Scripture lead to salvation. "Not every one can be made wise unto salvation by the writings of the Old Covenant, but only every one who believes in Christ. Faith in Christ is, as it were, a torch, by the light of which we can first read aright and understand the dim colonnades and mysterious inscriptions in the ancient venerable temple of the Old Covenant." (Van Oosterzee.)

**16. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable.** Two forms of translation here have divided eminent interpreters since the time of Origen, both of which are grammatically and logically possible; either, *Every Scripture* (Scripture in every part) *is inspired by God and profitable*, or, *Every Scripture, being inspired by God, is also profitable*. In both the divine inspiration of the Scriptures is clearly affirmed. For 1. *Scripture* (*γράφη*), which is used, in the singular or plural, more than fifty times in the

New Testament, designates, in each instance of its use, the Old Testament, as received and used among the Jews in the age of Christ and the apostles. It was, therefore, a technical word, equivalent in usage to a proper name, and as such it might, as here, dispense with the article. 2. *Every Scripture* (τὰς γραφὰς) thus necessarily denotes *holy Scripture in every part*—that is, in all its separate books and passages. The phrase is equivalent to *all Scripture*, including all then known as *holy Scripture*. For a similar use of *all* or *every* (τὰς), see Eph. 2: 21; 3: 21; Col. 1: 15, 23; 1 Peter 1: 15, 24. If, then, the second form of translation proposed above be taken, the assertion is not, “*Every writing, if inspired of God, is also profitable*,” as if a part of the writings referred to were not inspired, but, *Every Scripture* (that is, *Holy Scripture in every part*), *since it is inspired by God, is also profitable*. It is profitable because it is inspired by God. “It certainly seems distinctly to imply this vital truth, that every separate portion of the Holy Book is inspired, and forms a living portion of a living and organic whole.” (Ellicott.) Thus Origen and some of the Fathers, as also many modern interpreters, as Alford, Huther, and Wordsworth. The first form of translation, however, seems to me the more natural construction of the language. For 1. The apostle's evident design is to set before Timothy the great worth of the truths he had been taught from *Holy Scripture*; and nothing could be more germane to this purpose than to remind him (*a*) that *Scripture* is in every part divinely inspired, and (*b*) that it is profitable for the complete equipment of the man of God. 2. The translation of the conjunction (καὶ, *and*) as *also*, though in some relations proper and necessary, is here extremely harsh; it stands far more naturally as the connective of the two predicates—*inspired of God and profitable*. “Clearly, the adjectives are so closely connected that as surely as one is a predicate the other must be also.” (Fausset.) “First, he commends the *Scripture* on account of its authority, and secondly, on account of the utility which springs from it.” (Calvin.) Thus Chrysostom, Gregory Nyssa, Beza, De Wette, Wiesinger, Conybeare, and Fairbairn. ‘Is given by inspiration of God’—in the Greek, expressed by a single word (*θεόπνευστος*); liter-

ally, *God-inspired*. In the New Testament the relation of God to *Holy Scripture* is expressed in three different forms. 1. The language is attributed directly to God: as, “*God saith*” (Acts 2: 17); “*the Holy Ghost saith*.” (Heb. 9: 8.) 2. The language is attributed to God, but as spoken through a human agent; as, the Lord “*spake by the mouth of his holy prophets*” (Luke 1: 70); “*God . . . spake unto the fathers by the prophets*.” (Heb. 1: 1.) 3. The language is ascribed to men speaking as inspired by God; as, “*David himself said by the Holy Ghost*.” (Mark 12: 36.) “*No prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit*.” See 2 Peter 1: 21, Revised Version; 1 Peter 1: 10-12. These are the usual forms by which in the New Testament the relation of God to *Scripture* is expressed; and in all of them God is represented as the true author of *Holy Scripture*, while the human writers are the medium through which God makes communication to mankind. It is plain, also, that God, in speaking through a human medium, speaks through the entire faculties, the whole personality of the man; so that the communication, in its forms of thought and diction, bears the perfect impress of the man, with all his idiosyncrasies, while yet it is, in all respects, that which God intended to be made, and is *God-inspired*. **For doctrine** (*instruction*)—not for making one an instructor, but for instructing him who reads; the word has special reference to *Scripture* as imparting theoretical or doctrinal knowledge in divine things. **For reproof** (*conviction*)—for the detection and reproof of all that is false or wrong as to truth or duty, whether in ourselves or in others. (1 Tim. 5: 20.) **For correction**—literally, *for making rectification*; for reformation. In ‘reproof’ (*conviction*), the *Scriptures* are perhaps conceived chiefly as the rule of faith, convicting of error and guiding to truth, as Gal. 3: 6, 13, 16; but in *correction*, chiefly as the rule of life, rectifying wrong and restoring to right living, as 1 Cor. 10: 1-10. **For instruction** (*training*) **in righteousness**. *Scripture* trains, or educates, by guiding and inspiring the soul in holiness and right living. (Titus 2: 2.) It is the manual of spiritual education, training the man in right moral and spiritual thinking and feeling and action. Compare Ps. 19: 8-14; 119.

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

17 for <sup>1</sup>instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.

## CHAPTER IV.

**I** CHARGE *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>I charge *thee* in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the quick and the dead, and <sup>2</sup> by his appearing and his kingdom; preach the

1 Or, discipline.....2 Or, *I testify, in the sight . . . dead, both of his appearing, etc.*

**17. That the man of God may be perfect**—“ready at every point” (Alford); “complete in all parts and proportions.” (Elliott.) This is the end, or purpose, of Scripture in its several uses as above described; it would make the man complete in character and life, and in fitness for his Christian calling and work. **Thoroughly furnished unto all good works**—for all that belongs to a Christian man to do. The Scriptures are a full and sufficient guide in all doctrines and duties, completely equipping the man who rightly uses them for every good work.

**NOTE.**—The Old Testament, as interpreted in the light of the New, is “profitable” for attaining salvation and perfecting Christian character. Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount, gives assurance that he came, not to destroy, but to fulfill the law, and shows that the New Testament is related to the Old, not as setting it aside, but as completing it. The New is only the unfolding and completing of the Old, as the finished revelation of salvation. Among the apostles, Paul makes specially large use of the Old Testament, using it in all the relations here indicated, for doctrine, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness: and so far from regarding it as belonging only to the past, he everywhere deals with it as the living and mighty word of God, potential for all time as a divinely inspired guide, when interpreted by the New, to salvation and eternal life.

**Ch. 4:1-8. SOLEMN CHARGE TO FIDELITY AND EARNESTNESS IN THE MINISTRY.**  
—1. He charges Timothy, as in the presence of God and of Christ, the Judge of all, and by his appearing and his kingdom, to preach the word with all earnestness and fidelity. (1, 2.) 2. As incentives to this, he mentions two things that were approaching. (a) A time as coming, when some in the church

will not endure sound instruction, but will multiply teachers chosen with a view to gratify their lusts, and will thus turn their ears from the truth, and turn aside to fables. Timothy, on the contrary, must be watchful, faithfully and fully accomplishing his ministry. (3-5.) (b) His own approaching removal from the work by martyrdom, with an exulting view of his life-conflict as now triumphantly ended, and of the glorious prospect immediately before him, while, as a victor, he awaits the crown of righteousness, which the Righteous Judge shall bestow on him; which crown, however, Christ will bestow, not on him only, but also on all who love his appearing. (6-8.)

**I. I charge thee, therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ.** The apostle summons him, as it were, into the presence of God and of the glorified Son of man, placing him before this august presence to receive his charge, as a minister of the gospel. **Who shall judge the quick (living) and the dead.** Christ is the final Judge, before whom all must stand and render account (Matt. 25:31-44; Acts 10:42; 17:31), especially the ministers, to whom he has entrusted the gospel and the care of the churches. (Rom. 14:9-12; 1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:9, 10.) ‘The quick (living) and the dead’—those who are alive at Christ’s coming and those who, having died, shall then be raised; none will escape his judgment. (1 Cor. 15: 1, 52; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.) “The emphasis laid on this universality of the judgment is to admonish Timothy of his inevitable responsibility.” (Wiesinger.)

**At his appearing and his kingdom**—not, ‘at his appearing,’ etc., but according to the oldest manuscripts and the general consent of interpreters, *and by his appearing*, etc., the words being construed after ‘charge,’ as that by virtue of which, or in view of which, the charge is given. He first places Timothy in the presence of God and of his final Judge, and then adjures him by all that is solemn and glorious in the revelation of Christ at his

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears:

word; be instant in season, out of season; <sup>1</sup> reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the <sup>2</sup>sound <sup>3</sup>doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts;

1 Or, bring to the proof.... 2 Gr. healthful.....3 Or, teaching.

second appearing and in the eternal kingdom which Christ shall reveal in its power and majesty at that day. For a similar charge, compare 1 Tim. 5: 21; 6: 13; for construction, Mark 5: 7; Acts 19: 13; 1 Thess. 5: 27.

**2. Preach the word**—the word of God, the gospel of Christ, as that for which the souls of men are perishing, and which alone will bring salvation. This word uncorrupted, as of sincerity, as of God, in the sight of God, he is to speak in Christ. (2 Cor. 2: 17; 5: 20.) Justin Martyr, in his second "Apology," thus describes the worship of the early churches: "On Sunday all meet, and the writings of the apostles and prophets are read; then the president delivers a discourse; after this all stand up and pray; then there is offered bread and wine and water; the president likewise prays and gives thanks, and the people solemnly assent, saying, Amen." **Be instant in season, out of season**—be urgent in it; be ever engaged in it. Whatever the time, or place, or presence, let this be the ever-present, all absorbing work. Let no timidity in thee, no personal inconvenience, no gratification of thy taste or pleasure hinder thee in it; but always and everywhere, faithfully and fearlessly declare to men the gospel that God has committed to thee. Do not, indeed, speak without regard to time and place and character (Matt. 7: 6; 27: 12-14); but remember that the time, which to thy imperfect and often timid view seems unseasonable, not seldom proves to be God's own time, and the word, a word in season. (Eccl. 11: 6.) Therefore, "let it be always time for thee; not in peace alone, or in quietness, or when in church. And if thou be in perils, if in prison, if compassed about with chains, if even going forth to death, even at that time, convict, withhold not the word of rebuke." (Chrysostom.) **Reprove (convince), rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine**—literally, *in all long suffering and teaching*, denoting the sphere, or element, in which the acts previously enjoined are to be done. "In every exhibition of long suffer-

ing and every method of teaching." (Elliot.) Patiently enduring stupidity, opposition, and injury, he is to be unwearied in teaching, seeking to convince those who are in error, to reprove those who do wrong, and to stir to action the lagging and careless; endeavoring by all means and in every way, to save souls, and to present at last every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Impatience is one of the chief dangers of the ministry. The pastor thus becomes either discouraged and abandons effort for souls, or irritated and, instead of instructing, denounces them; in either case losing his hold on them, and missing what were in fact divinely given opportunities for saving them.

**3. For the time will come when they will not endure (the) sound (wholesome) doctrine.** Ground of the foregoing exhortation; a time is at hand when they will not put up with the health-giving doctrine of the gospel, and therefore Timothy should be the more diligent to improve the present opportunity, while they will hear. He is speaking of professed Christians, persons within the church. 'Sound doctrine'—the gospel in its simplicity and purity, which gives health, soundness, to the spiritual man. (1 Tim. 1: 10; 6: 3; 2 Tim. 1: 13; Titus 1: 9; 2: 1, 8.) Those who cannot endure this show thereby that they are at heart opposed to the gospel, and the truth is thus here, as elsewhere, made the touchstone of character, in accordance with the words of Christ. (John 8: 43-47; 10: 26, 27.) Of this 'time,' in its various aspects, he has already spoken (1 Tim. 4: 1; 2 Tim. 3: 1); its beginnings were already present. **But after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.** 'Heap': the word marks, in a contemptuous way, the number of teachers they will gather to themselves. The tendency of such as refuse sound instruction under a trained, regular ministry is ever to the multiplication of teachers. Unstable, restless, they seek that which gratifies their fancy, caprice, or passion; or which may chance for

4 And they shall turn away *their ears* from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

the hour to be new and popular. The thought is probably of frequent changes from one teacher to another, as by persons who, having no real love for the truth, are led away by novelty. Their preference for teachers is determined, not by regard for the gospel, but by their vagrant tastes and fancies. 'After their own lusts.' Their own pleasure, not God's word, is the standard by which they choose their religious guides. Like Israel of old, they will say: "Speak unto us smooth things; prophesy deceits." (Isa. 30:10.) Of God's faithful preacher, they will say, as did Ahab of Micaiah: "I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." (1 Kings 22:8.) According to the fixed laws of moral being, the tendency of such men is ever to greater error and sin, and it proves true of them that, "because they received not the love of the truth, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, that they should believe a lie." (2 Thess. 2:11, 12.) 'Having itching ears'; the reason they will "heap to themselves teachers." Not seeking wholesome instruction, they are restlessly eager for that which is novel, or sensational, or popular, and which, instead of opposing, falls in with their own lusts. (Acts 17:19-21.)

**4. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables**—literally, *from the truth, indeed, they will turn away their ears, but unto the fables will they turn themselves aside*. A further description, showing the result of such a tendency: in the end they will utterly refuse the truth, and will turn aside to the profane and old wives' fables, of which he had before spoken. (1 Tim. 4:7.) This has had repeated fulfillment in history, as in the strange and senseless fables of the Gnostics, and in the *Acta Sanctorum* of the papal church, in which asceticism has been fostered by the legendary lore of hero saints, to whom are ascribed fabulous miracles, wrought through the virtue of monkish austerities and observances. "Whosoever will not listen to what is true, but only to what is pleasant, will at last wholly abandon himself to silly, fantastic chimeras." (Van Oosterzee.)

4 and will turn away their ears from the truth, and 5 turn aside unto fables. But be thou sober in all things, suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist,

**5. But**—in contrast with those just mentioned—**watch thou in all things**—or, *be sober*. It denotes the wakefulness and mental alertness which belong to sobriety, in contrast with the obtuseness and heedlessness in intoxication. *Sober*—those who are under the power of error and sin are mentally and spiritually intoxicated, and are living under the hallucinations and passions of drunkenness; only such as are under the power of truth and holiness are sober, with the clear vision and rightly-balanced mind and heart of sober men. (2:26; 1 Cor. 15:34; 1 Thess. 5:6.) "Maintain thy coolness and presence of mind, that thou be not ensnared into forgetfulness, but discern and use every opportunity of speaking and acting for the truth." **Endure afflictions**—or, as in the Revised Version, *suffer hardship*; that is, the hardship which the exercise of his office brought, in toil, reproach, and persecution. (2:9.) **Do the work of an evangelist.** This office is directly named only here and in Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11. In the former passage, Philip of Cesarea, the same who had served in Jerusalem as one of the Seven (Acts 6:5), and who subsequently instructed and baptized the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40), is called "the evangelist"; and in the latter, evangelists are mentioned among the gifts of the ascended Son of man to his church, when from his heavenly throne he "gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." The name indicates their work as pre-eminently that of preaching the gospel (*ειαγγελιον*); and from this passage, as well as from the work of Philip, we may infer as probable that they were itinerant ministers, as Apollos, Timothy, Titus, Luke, and others; and that their work, as distinguished from that of pastors, was rather that of missionaries sent forth to evangelize regions where the gospel was unknown, and organize and strengthen churches on destitute or missionary fields. Here it is plain that Timothy was not "bishop of Ephesus," as some affirm; for had he been such, Paul would have so addressed him. He was an

6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

6 fulfil thy ministry. For I am already being<sup>1</sup> offered, 7 and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *poured out as a drink-offering.*

evangelist, acting as an assistant to the apostle; and, in Paul's absence, charged with some of the apostle's functions. **Make full proof of (accompany fully) thy ministry**—fulfill all its duties; “so exercise it that thou duly give attention to all its parts”; leave nothing undone. His ministry should be a complete fulfilling of the office in all its duties and responsibilities.

**6. For I.** The imminence of the apostle's death is here introduced as an incentive to Timothy to fidelity and earnestness in his work, as if the apostle said: My work is done. No longer can I labor in the gospel. The burden now falls on thee. Be true to Christ and his word, looking forward, as I have done, to the great reward, “the crown of righteousness,” which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will bestow—not on me only, but also on thee, if faithful to the end. **Am now ready to be offered**—Revised Version, *Am already being offered*; or, being poured out, as a libation or drink offering, at a sacrifice. His blood is already being poured forth as an offering for the cause of God; so said because the process had already begun, in his trial before Nero, which would certainly and speedily end in the shedding of his blood in martyrdom. As the wine was poured out at the altar in the offering to God (Num. 15:5; 28:7), so his blood is, as it were, already being shed in his then imminent bloody death. Compare Phil. 2:17. “In a most significant way he compares his own martyr death, not with a sacrifice proper or a burnt offering, but with a drink offering of a little wine and oil, which is added like a supplement, and thus connects his dying for the truth with the sacrificial death of the only Martyr. Compare 1 Tim. 6:13; Col. 1:24.” (Van Oosterzee.) Others interpret of a libation poured upon the victims preparatory to sacrifice, “in allusion to the custom which prevailed among the heathen generally of pouring wine and oil on the head of a victim when it was about to be offered.” Thus Barnes, Fausset. **And the time of my departure is at hand.** The word ‘departure’ (*ἀνάβοστος*) is used of unloosing, or casting off, the fasten-

ing of a ship, preparatory to its departure on a voyage; and here, “loosing the cable from this earthly shore on a voyage to the eternal harbor of heavenly peace.” (Wordsworth.) It suggests a beautiful view of death as at once a release from earth and the passage to the heavenly life.

**7. I have fought a (the) good fight**—or (as the language is not restricted to a *fight*, but may denote any form of contest), if the following clause be taken as defining and completing the figure in this, *I have maintained the noble contest*; or, with Ellicott, “The good strife I have striven.” He draws a figure, as so often, from the Greek games, and compares his Christian life to a contest among the athletes, who contended for the prize. (Acts 20:24; 1 Tim. 6:12.) With them the contest was for a brief hour, and the prize a corruptible crown; with him the contest, continuous and strenuous, was maintained through life, and the prize was an incorruptible crown. (1 Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 3:12-14.) “There is nothing nobler than this contest. This crown is indestructible, it is not a thing of wild olives. It has not man for presiding arbiter, nor has it men for spectators; the theatre is filled with angel witnesses.” (Chrysostom.) **I have finished my course**—the form of contest is the race. That race is vividly set forth in Heb. 12:1, where “a great cloud of witnesses,” the heroes of faith in all the ages past, are beholding the contest and applauding those who “run with patience the race set before” them. To “finish this course with joy” had been the apostle's life endeavor; and now the course was run, the goal was reached, and already his faith beholds the Judge conferring the “unfading crown of glory.” **I have kept the faith.** Suspending the figure, he now uses direct speech. The gospel, that sacred trust committed to me by Christ, I have held firmly to the end. ‘The faith’ here, as is usual in the Pastoral Epistles, is objective, the system of truth contained in the gospel. This, amid all the apostasies of professed friends and all the persecutions of foes, he had unflinchingly held, and he was now about to seal

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

his testimony to these truths by a martyr death.

**8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a (the) crown of righteousness**—that is, the crown which is bestowed in view of, or as the reward of, righteousness. Elsewhere the crown is characterized as to its nature, as “the crown of life,” in James 1:12; “the crown of glory,” in 1 Peter 5:4; but here the fitness, or rectitude, of its bestowal is set forth, as is evident from the characterizing of him who bestows it as *the righteous Judge*. The goal is reached; the race is won; it is fitting and right, therefore, that the crown be bestowed on the victor. (Col. 1:5; 1 Peter 1:4.) ‘Laid up’—securely reserved, as a treasure gained and kept in a safe place for the future. **Which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.** ‘Righteous judge’—with special emphasis in the Greek, possibly in contrast with Nero, his unrighteous earthly judge. Christ is the judge from whose hand the victor shall receive the crown; and the time of the award is ‘that day,’ the day of his glorious appearing and of the final judgment, when, in the presence of the assembled universe, *the Righteous Judge* shall requite and exalt his faithful servants. See Matt. 13:49; 25:21, 31-46; Luke 19:17; Acts 10:42; 2 Thess. 1:5-10. ‘Shall give’—properly, according to nearly uniform usage in the New Testament, *shall recompense, reward*, as the bestowal of that which is in some sense due. Here it is the award of a prize to the victor in a contest. But the reward is wholly of grace; for it was only through the grace of Christ the apostle achieved the victory, and thus obtained the title to the gracious promises of God. He ever declared: “By the grace of God, I am what I am”; “I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God that was in me.” (1 Cor. 15:10.) But God makes gracious promises to Christians; if they fulfill the conditions of these promises, he is righteous in bestowing on them the things promised. (Heb. 6:10.) The ‘crown of righteousness’ is thus awarded as the righteous requital of all the toil and conflict through which the victory

8 have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing.

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for

has been achieved, and as the just reward of the righteous character which has thereby been attained. The glory of the redeemed will appear, therefore, to the moral universe, not only as exhibiting God’s infinite grace, but also as having in itself an absolute moral fitness in the nature of things. (Rom. 2:6, 7; 2 Cor. 5:10.) **And not to me only.** “It is, however, no special apostolic privilege, no martyr prerogative.” (Beck.) At the Grecian games one only could obtain the crown; all others, however earnestly they had striven, must fail. But in the heavenly race the prize is not reserved for a single, distinguished contestant; every earnest soul, however humble his position, if he truly strive to the end, shall win. The Lord will bestow the victor’s crown on all who made him the goal of their earthly course. **But unto all them also that love his appearing**—all who, having loved Christ, have longingly looked forward to his glorious appearing. (1 Tim. 6:14; Titus 2:13; Rev. 22:20.) As if he had said: This crown awaits not me alone, but thee also, and all those who have truly loved and followed Christ, with hope fixed on the glory to be revealed when he shall appear. (Rom. 8:18-23.) “‘Them that love’—*have loved and do love*: habitual love and desire for Christ’s appearing, which presupposes faith. (Heb. 9:28.) Compare the sad contrast in ver. 10, ‘having loved this present world.’” (Fausset.)

**9-15. TIMOTHY URGED TO HASTEN HIS COMING TO ROME.**—1. A reason is assigned for this; the apostle is almost forsaken, all his usual fellow-workers, except Luke, having left the city. (10, 11.) 2. In coming he is to bring with him Mark, as also certain articles left behind at Troas. (12, 13.) 3. He takes occasion to put Timothy on his guard against a certain Alexander, who had proved a bitter opposer. (14, 15.)

**9. Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me.** He makes here an urgent request for that at which he had before only hinted. (1:4, 8.) He is about to suffer death, and with a feeling kindred to that of his Lord (Matt. 26:37, 38), he desires the presence and sympathy

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

10 Demas forsook me, having loved this present <sup>1</sup> world, and went to Thessalonica; Crescens to <sup>2</sup>Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is useful

<sup>1</sup> Or, *age*. . . . . <sup>2</sup> Or, *Gaul*.

of his best-loved friend. Other reasons for hastening his coming were the approach of winter, when traveling would be difficult (ver. 21), and the nearness of his death. (ver. 7.) It may be, also, that there were urgent needs in the condition of the Christian cause at Rome for Timothy's presence, especially as Paul himself could no longer supervise its interests.

**10. For Demas hath forsaken me.** This person is mentioned among the apostle's honored fellow-workers. (Col. 4:14; Philem. 24.) Demas' desertion of him, therefore, at this hour of peril and suffering, must have been all the more keenly felt. **Having loved this present world**—"that is, the earthly, visible world, with its good things, in opposition to the invisible, still future kingdom of Christ, which was the object of the highest love of Paul, and for the sake of which he endured willingly the heaviest affliction." (Van Oosterzee.) Whether from lack of courage and fortitude, he had shrunk from possible suffering or death, if identified with the apostle in his peril, or from love of pleasure or gain he had been drawn away from the ministerial work into some secular pursuit, is not determined by the text; the latter has been the more common conjecture. In either case his act was not necessarily an apostasy from Christ, as is sometimes hastily inferred; it may have been only a temporary lapse of faith. "Observe the solemn contrast between him, who 'loved this present world,' and those who 'love his appearing.'" (Wordsworth.) **And is departed unto Thessalonica**—the modern Salonica, then a great commercial capital of Macedonia, and still one of the largest cities of European Turkey. Chrysostom speaks of this as Demas' native place, and an old, but improbable, tradition states that he became there an idol priest. **Crescens to Galatia**—possibly not Galatia in Asia Minor, but Gaul in Europe, as the same word designated both countries sometimes, and *Gallia* is the reading in the Sinaitic

and Alexandrian codices, and in several cursives, with some manuscripts of the early Latin version. Thus also Euæbius and Theodoret. A late tradition reports him as founding the church at Vienne in Gaul. **Titus to Dalmatia**—a part of the ancient Illyricum, on the Adriatic. Crescens and Titus probably went by the apostle's direction, and seem not to be included in the censure on Demas. It would appear, therefore, that Titus had left Crete, after "setting in order" the affairs of the churches there (Titus 1:5); had then, according to the apostle's direction (Titus 3:12), gone to him at Nicopolis, in Epirus, and thence followed him to Rome, from which place he had now passed to Dalmatia.

**11. Only Luke is with me**—that is, of his fellow laborers; other friends were with him. (ver. 21.) By Luke is meant, without doubt, the writer of Luke's Gospel and of the Acts, who had so long and faithfully attended the apostle. He had accompanied Paul during parts of his second and third missionary tours, in his imprisonment at Cesarea, in the voyage to Rome, and his first imprisonment there (Acts 16:10; 20:6; 24:23; 28:26); and now he is found with him in his last and most severe imprisonment, on the eve of his martyrdom. Luke was a physician (Col. 4:14), as well as an evangelist; and to a Christian character, singularly beautiful in its modest worth, he added a refined Greek culture, as is evident in the Gospel and the Acts written by him. Tradition places the sphere of his later ministry in Gaul, but his tomb is still pointed out among the ruins at Ephesus. **Take Mark, and bring him with thee.** The evangelist Mark, cousin of Barnabas, attended Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey, but on reaching Pamphylia left them, apparently shrinking from the danger and hardship—a circumstance which subsequently led to a dissension between the missionaries, and when Barnabas went to labor in Cyprus, Mark accompanied him. At a later period he was with Paul at Rome (Acts 12:25; 15:38, 39; Col. 4:10), and still later he is

12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

13 The cloak that I left at Troas, with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and the books, *but especially the parchments*.

found with Peter at Babylon. (1 Peter 5:13.) It is not known where he was when this Epistle was written; but Timothy is instructed to take him up on his way (compare Acts 20:18, 14), and bring him. He seems to have fully redeemed his character, so sadly sullied by the desertion in Pamphylia, and found again the full confidence of the apostle. Tradition connects his later ministry with Egypt and Alexandria. **For he is profitable to me for the ministry.** Whether this refers to personal service to Paul, or to public service as a minister, is not absolutely clear; but the latter is highly probable. As Mark had been much in Rome, it is conjectured that his knowledge of the Latin language and of the Roman people gave him special adaptation to the work there.

**12. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus**—not, ‘I have sent.’ The expression does not prove that Timothy was not, at this time, in Ephesus; for it may signify *I sent* (as thou knowest). Tychicus was with Paul on his third missionary journey (Acts 20:5); and during the first Roman imprisonment the apostle sent him as the bearer of the epistles to the Ephesians, to the Colossians, and probably to Philemon; at which time he characterizes him as “the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord” (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7). He is now sent again to Ephesus, but the purpose is not stated; possibly it was to fill temporarily the place of Timothy while he went to Paul at Rome. **The cloak that I left at Troas, with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee.** Some translate *book case*, or *book bag*, in which books are carried; but cloak is the more probable rendering. It was a long, thick garment, without sleeves, enwrapping the whole body; such a garment as Paul would greatly need in his damp, unwarmed cell. In the stress of persecution, he may have been hurried away from Troas, leaving this, with the books, behind. His deep poverty is evident in his sending so far for such a garment. “The mention of his ‘cloak,’ so far from being unworthy of inspiration, is one of those graphic touches which sheds a flood of light on the last scene of Paul’s life, on the confines of two worlds; in this, wanting a cloak to cover him

12 to me for ministering. But Tychicus I sent to 13 Ephesus. The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring when thou comest, and the books, espe-

from the winter cold; in that, covered with the righteousness of saints, ‘clothed upon with his house from heaven.’” (Fausset.) This passage plainly supposes that Paul had recently left Troas, and forbids the supposition that this Epistle was written during the first Roman imprisonment; for at that time his last visit to Troas had occurred in the spring, A. D. 58, on his way to Jerusalem. (Acts 20:6.) He was then imprisoned at Cesarea two years, after which he reached Rome in the spring, A. D. 61, and spent “two whole years” preaching the gospel “in his own hired house,” bringing us to the spring, A. D. 63, before the circumstances under which this Epistle was written could have existed. Thus more than five, and, probably, fully six, years must have passed when he wrote in this way respecting the things left in Troas, a supposition wholly incredible. This circumstance, therefore, seems to me as one of several incidental, but decisive proofs that the Pastoral Epistles were written at a later period than the Roman imprisonment related in Acts, and after Paul had again visited Asia Minor. **And the books, but especially the parchments.** The books, written on papyrus, were more perishable; but the parchments were costly, and doubtless were writings of higher importance. The apostle was now an old man, and was looking forward to a martyr’s death; but the love of study remained, and even in the felon’s cell he wants his books. Though inspired, perpetual study was with him, as with all men, the source of freshness and power in preaching. “Poor inventory of a saint’s possessions! not worth a hundredth part of what a buffoon would get for one jest in Cesar’s palace, or an acrobat for a feat in the amphitheatre; but would he have exchanged them for the jewels of the adventurer Agrippa, or the purple of the unspeakable Nero? No, he is more than content. His soul is joyful in God. If he has the cloak to keep him warm, and the books and parchments to teach and encourage him, and if, above all, Timothy will come himself, then life will shed on him its last rays of sunshine; and in lesser things, as in all greater, he will wait with thankfulness, even with exultation,

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works;

15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withheld our words.

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: *I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.*

14 cially the parchments. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord will render to him according to his works; of whom be thou ware also; for he greatly withheld our words. At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me:

1 Gr. *shewed.*

the pouring out in libation of those last few drops of his heart's blood, of which the rich, full stream has for these long years been flowing forth upon God's altar in willing sacrifice." (Farrar.)

**14. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil**—or, "showed me much ill-treatment." (Ellicott.) Not necessarily "the coppersmith," but used in later Greek of a worker in any of the metals, especially in iron. Whether he is identical with the Alexander mentioned as put forward by the Jews before the Ephesian assembly (Acts 19:33,34), or with him who is described, with Hymeneus, as a blasphemer and excommunicated person (1 Tim. 1:20), cannot be determined; it is not improbable that in all three places the same person is intended. Possibly Alexander had come to Rome as one of Paul's accusers before the imperial court, and the correct translation here may be, as given by Lange, "laid many evil charges against me"; and now, after the apostle's trial and acquittal on the first charge, he had returned to Ephesus, smarting under his defeat, and likely, therefore, to be the more dangerous to the cause there. **The Lord reward (will requite) him according to his work**—not an imprecation, but, according to the best manuscripts, a prophecy. Whether he affirms the certainty of this from the general fact that all men will be judged according to their deeds, or from a special revelation made to him in regard to this man, the language here does not decide. But the apostle, refraining from personal judgment, leaves him to the certain and holy judgment of God, assured that it will be according to his works.

**15. Of whom be thou ware also.** The opposition to the gospel which led him to withhold Paul, would lead him also to oppose Timothy; and the apostle gives this warning against him as a man not to be instructed, as in 2:25, but to be watched and avoided. **For he hath greatly withheld our words.** He had been an aggressive, persistent, and

perhaps violent, opposer. 'Our words'—either the gospel as taught by Paul and others at Ephesus, or the words of the apostle in his recent defense before the Roman Court.

**16-18. ACCOUNT OF PAUL'S FIRST DEFENSE BEFORE THE IMPERIAL COURT.**—He states that on this occasion: 1. No one came forward in his behalf, but all men forsook him; which sin he prays that God will not account to them. 2. Christ, however, stood by him and strengthened him, in order that through him the proclamation of the gospel might be fully made in the hearing of the Gentiles. 3. The result was his deliverance; and he is confident that the Lord will deliver him and preserve him unto the heavenly kingdom, to whom he ascribes the glory unto eternal ages.

**16. At my first answer—public defense** (*ἀπολογία*), openly made before a court. The charge against him seems to have had two counts, on which he was tried separately. Here the defense was on the first count, and on this he seems to have been acquitted. Possibly the first count charged complicity in the burning of Rome, a crime which Nero charged upon the Christians; and by proving that he was absent from Rome at the time of the conflagration, he obtained acquittal; while the second count may have been the crime of introducing a *religio illicita*, an unlegalized religion, the penalty of which was death. **No man stood with me**—or, *came forward for me*; a forensic expression, signifying that there was no legal advocate, or counsel, but here perhaps referring to the total absence of supporters. He stood before the court wholly unsupported by sympathizing friends, whose presence might cheer him in the trial and might favorably affect the minds of his judges. Even his witnesses seem to have failed him, a fact to which possibly he refers in 1:15, in speaking of "all they which are in Asia" as having "turned away from" him. **But all men forsook me.** The peril of his position was so great that no one had courage to appear

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

17 may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by me, and <sup>1</sup>strengthened me; that through me the <sup>2</sup>message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was de-

1 Or, *gave me power*. . . . . 2 Or, *proclamation*.

as his friend, even as a witness in his behalf. The annals of persecution under Nero may well suggest the fearful danger of him who should publicly appear in behalf of a Christian, especially of one so distinguished as Paul. The most cruel tortures, the most terrible forms of death, were inflicted on the hated sect. The noble apostle thus stood absolutely friendless and forsaken before the imperial court. Compare the similar abandonment, in time of danger and calamity, of Job (19:13-17), of David, (Ps. 38:2; 41:9; 55:12-14), and of Christ himself (Matt. 26:56). **I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge**—“may God forgive them, as I do!” Grievous as was the wrong done to him, great as was the sin they thus committed against God, he prays that the Lord will not account it to them. He sees the magnitude of the danger to which such an exhibition of their friendship will expose them, and his generous heart forgives their weakness. (Luke 23:34; Acts 7:60.)

**17. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me**—or, “supplied me with inward strength.” (Phil. 4:13; 1 Tim. 1:12.) Forsaken by all earthly friends, he was not alone. There was One beside him—invisible, indeed, to that haughty Roman Court, but absolutely real and visible to the inward sense of the undefended, deserted prisoner; and from this glorious Presence he received a more than mortal strength in all the faculties of his soul. He was filled with a power that lifted him above fear, inspired holy boldness, suggested thoughts and words, and clothed the whole man with a divine energy which his enemies could not resist. Christ’s words were fulfilled in him: “Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak: for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” (Matt. 10:18-20.) The great promise was verified: “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Man

may forsake us, but God never forsakes his people. (Ps. 21:10; Isa. 43:1, 2.) **That by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear**—that is, that, being thus filled with divine power, he might be able, in the presence of the Roman Court and of the vast assembly of representative men of all nations gathered there, to declare fully the gospel message. It is not of himself the apostle thinks, even in this supreme moment of danger; but, as at Cesarea before Felix, and before Festus and Agrippa, so here before the imperial court at Rome, he uses the occasion less for a mere personal defense than for the proclamation of the saving truths of the gospel, which the Lord had committed to him. Thus, in one of those great basilicas in the Roman Forum, the blessed words of the divine salvation rang out in the ears of the noblest in Rome, and of multitudes from all parts of the empire, to most of whom the glad tidings of God’s rich grace in Christ were then first published. ‘The preaching might be fully known.’ “It is his defense in the capital of the world, the representative of the nations, before the supreme tribunal and the encircling multitude of people, which Paul regards as the crown and consummation of his apostolic preaching, and as preaching in the hearing of all nations.” (Wiesinger.) Compare Acts 9:15; 26:16. **And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.** What lion? Several answers are given: 1. Nero, who in his brutal rage and cruelty is compared to this ravenous beast. 2. The lions of the amphitheatre, to which Paul was in danger of being thrown, but from which he was saved by establishing his Roman citizenship. 3. The danger in which he had stood of conviction and condemnation to death, from which he had been saved by his acquittal. Thus David, when in danger and calamity, prays: “Save me from the lion’s mouth” (Ps. 22:21; 35:7), a figure often recurring in Scripture (Ps. 57:4; Jer. 51:38; Hosea 11:10). An obvious objection, however, to all these explanations, is that the apostle, in the next verse, expresses confidence that he will still experience similar deliver-

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

20 Erastus abode at Coriuth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

18 livered out of the mouth of the lion. The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the house of Onesiphorus. Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *unto the ages of the ages.*

ance, whereas it is plain from ver. 6-8, that he did not expect to be delivered from death, but believes that his martyrdom at the hands of his enemies is imminent. 4. Others, therefore, regard the word as referring to Satan (*Luke 22:31; 1 Peter 5:8*), and the danger from which he was rescued as the temptation to deny Christ, or, at least, to shrink in that great Presence from a full confession of him. From this temptation he was delivered, and he received strength to make a bold and clear confession of his Lord before that heathen assembly; though he stood there alone, uncheered by a single sympathizing face and in imminent peril of death. This last interpretation seems to me the most natural one, as well as the most consonant with the context.

**18. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work.** He is fully assured of like deliverance from temptation to sin, even to the end. ‘Evil work’—not injury done to him by others,—it is plain he did not expect deliverance from this,—but sin done by himself, such as that of denying Christ, from which he had just been delivered. He is sure the Lord will to the end strengthen him to maintain the good confession. Thus Chrysostom, Beza, Grotius, De Wette, Alford, Faustus, and others. “Experience brings hope with it; he who has been so often in peril, and has been saved—who feels, too, every day the saving help—can surely be of good hope that the Lord will always save him.” (Hedinger.)

**And will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.** The Lord’s grace will not fail him, but in every temptation will preserve him till he reaches the heavenly kingdom. This is an assured hope, but it is based, not on his own strength, or the maturity of his Christian growth, but only on the Lord’s faithfulness and power. “The very *hope* produces a doxology; how much greater the doxology which the actual *enjoyment* shall produce!” (Bengel.) **To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen**—a doxology to Christ, which in

Paul has the parallels, Rom. 9:5; Heb. 13:21; and in other Scriptures. See 1 Peter 4:11; 2 Peter 3:18; Rev. 1:6. A doxology to the Father, similar in form, is found in Gal. 1:5; Phil. 4:20; such a doxology to any mere created being would surely be impious; and its use, here and elsewhere, demonstrates the supreme divinity of Christ.

**19-22. VARIOUS SALUTATIONS, WITH A CLOSING BENEDICTION.**

**19. Salute Prisca and Aquila.** Prisca, or Priscilla, was the wife of Aquila, of Pontus. Paul met them first at Corinth, whither they had come from Rome after the decree of Claudius expelling the Jews from that city, and where Paul, being of the same trade, wrought with them at tent making. They accompanied him to Ephesus, where, after Paul’s departure, they met the eloquent Alexandrian, Apollos, and “expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” (Acts 18:2, 18, 26.) When the apostle wrote First Corinthians they were with him at Ephesus, where, it seems, they had a house of their own and were then residing. (1 Cor. 16:19.) They are afterward mentioned as at Rome (Rom. 16:3), but must now have returned to Ephesus. “Here, also, as it often occurs, Prisca is named before her husband. It may perhaps be considered a proof that she was his superior, either as regards character or in respect to the development of her spiritual life.” (Van’Oosterzee.)

**And the household of Onesiphorus.** He is mentioned, ch. 1:16, as having shown special kindness to Paul, who invokes mercy on his house. The supposition that Onesiphorus himself was dead, because Paul salutes only his household, is wholly unnecessary, since the apostle may have known that he was then absent from Ephesus, and therefore omitted salutation to him. These salutations to Prisca and Aquila, and to the house of Onesiphorus, make it well nigh certain that the Epistle was directed to Timothy when at Ephesus.

**20. Erastus abode (remained) at Coriuth.** While Paul was in Ephesus he sent on

21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

22 The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

Erastus with Timothy to Macedonia (Acts 19: 22); and in Rom. 16: 23 greeting is sent by an Erastus, described as "chamberlain," or financial administrator, of Corinth. Probably the latter is meant here, but certainty is unattainable. **But Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.** He was an Ephesian, and had accompanied the apostle from Corinth to Jerusalem on the third missionary journey (Acts 20: 4; 21: 29), where his presence proved the innocent occasion of the assault on Paul in the temple. These notices plainly show that Paul had lately been at Corinth and Miletus—a fact wholly inconsistent with the writing of this Epistle during the Roman imprisonment recorded in Acts, at which time five, and probably six years, must have passed since he had visited those cities. 'Left . . . sick.' This, with other instances of unhealed sickness in Paul himself and his friends, clearly shows that miracles of healing were not wrought at the mere will, even of an apostle; they were doubtless exceptional manifestations of divine power, made only as the Holy Spirit directed and empowered him who performed them.

**21. Do thy diligence to come before winter.** Probably because travel would then be dangerous, if not impossible, and because any delay might make him too late to see the apostle before his martyrdom. Voyages on the Mediterranean were not usually made in winter, but vessels sought some harbor for wintering. (Acts 27: 9-12.) Whether this last wish of the apostle was gratified, and the closing hours of his life were comforted by the presence of his dearest earthly friend, we are left wholly uncertain. Tradition states that Paul suffered martyrdom in the reign of Nero, who died in June, A. D. 68; and that his death was by decapitation, outside the walls of the city, on the *Via Ostia*, at a spot now called *Tre Fontane*, not far from which rises the magnificent basilica which bears his name.

21 I left at Miletus sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus saluteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

22 The Lord be with thy spirit. Grace be with you.

**Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia.** The persons here named are not otherwise known, but doubtless they were Christians of distinction at Rome. Pudens and Claudia have, on very doubtful data, been identified as a Roman noble and a British princess, who were converted at Rome, were married, and died in the British Isles. (See *Excursus to the Prolegomena on this Epistle* in Alford, as also *note in loco* in Conybeare and Howson's "Life and Epistles of St. Paul.") Linus may possibly be the person mentioned by Irenaeus as the first bishop of Rome.

**22. The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.** This is personal, as the prayer of the apostle for Timothy. It invokes on him the highest possible blessing—Christ abiding as an ever manifested Presence with Timothy's spirit. (Gal. 6: 18; Philem. 25.) **The grace (of God) be with you. Amen.** Here in the invocation he unites with Timothy those also who are with him, perhaps the church at Ephesus; and for them the prayer invokes all that is comprehended in the grace, or free favor, of God, the infinite blessings of salvation and eternal life.

The subscription, "The second epistle unto Timotheus," etc., as the subscription to other epistles, has no authority. The statement in it that Timothy was "ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians" is plainly contradicted by the Epistle itself, where he ever appears, not as a bishop, but as an evangelist and as an apostolic assistant. Of a diocesan bishop at Ephesus, or anywhere else, the New Testament furnishes no trace; and the existence of such an office in the apostolic churches is an assumption at variance with the plain fact that in Scripture "bishop" and "elder" are interchangeable terms, designating one and the same office. See Acts 20: 17, 28; Titus 1: 5-7; 1 Peter 5: 1, 2.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

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## SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF TITUS.

The name of Titus does not occur in the Acts ; we know him only from the Epistles. To explain this, it has been conjectured that Titus is the same person as Silas, or Sylvanus. To this, however, it seems an insuperable objection, that Silas, as a deputy from the church at Jerusalem to the church at Antioch, was most probably a Jew, or, if of Gentile origin, was at least a uncircumcised person ; whereas Titus was a Gentile and uncircumcised. He is commonly supposed to belong to Antioch in Syria, and was probably converted under Paul's ministry, as the apostle calls him his "own son after the common faith." (1 : 4.) For he went up with Paul to Jerusalem, when a delegation from Antioch was sent thither on the question of Gentile circumcision ; and it was here the apostle refused to yield to the demand of the Judaizers for his circumcision, apparently making the case of Titus, as an uncircumcised Gentile Christian, a test, the decision of which would plainly prove Gentile freedom from the bondage of Judaism. (Gal 2 : 1-3.) Nothing further is known of him until, on Paul's third missionary journey, during the long residence at Ephesus, Titus is sent from that city to Corinth, to ascertain the state of the church there, and especially the effect on them of the apostle's first epistle, sent to them not long before. He was well received at Corinth, and his labors there were productive of much good. (2 Cor. 7 : 13-15.) Paul, on leaving Ephesus, expected to meet Titus at Troas ; and not finding him there, in his great anxiety for intelligence from Corinth, he hastened to Macedonia to meet him. (2 Cor. 2 : 13.) Thither at length Titus came, and, reporting the condition of the Corinthian Church, greatly relieved the apostle's heart. (2 Cor. 7 : 6, 7.) Paul then wrote his second epistle to Corinth, and, intrusting it to Titus, sent him again to that city, with "the brother whose praise is in all the churches," to hasten the collection "for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem." (2 Cor. 8 : 6, 16-23.) At what time he went with Paul to Crete is not fully settled ; but, as before shown, it was probably near the close of Paul's life. When the apostle left the island, he left Titus there to complete the work begun, especially in giving additional organization to the churches, and correcting false tendencies ; and after his departure, he wrote to him this Epistle, both as attesting his authority to act in the apostle's stead, and as directing Titus in the responsible work committed to him. Whether, as the Epistle directs, he met Paul the following winter in Nicopolis, is unknown. The only further notice of him is in the apostle's last epistle. (2 Tim. 4 : 10.) When, writing of his lonely position as a prisoner in Rome, he speaks of Titus as "departed to Dalmatia," sent, as we may hope, by the apostle himself on some mission for the gospel.

Tradition, as usual, has sought to fill up the gaps of history, and, in the hierarchical interest, has made him, "the first bishop of Crete," of which the Epistle furnishes no evidence whatever. Alford well remarks : "Not the slightest trace is found in the Epistle of any intention on the part of Paul to place Titus permanently over the Cretan churches ;

indeed, such a view is inconsistent with the data furnished us in it." The Epistle plainly represents him, as in the case of Timothy, simply as an evangelist; acting as Paul's assistant, and temporarily left in Crete, in the apostle's place, to complete a service which Paul himself was not able to finish by reason of exigencies calling him elsewhere. Tradition also depicts him, in glowing colors, as the apostle of the gospel to Dalmatia, and as then taking up his abode in Crete, where he lived to a good old age, and died in great honor; of all which we have no trace either in authentic history or in archaeological remains.

#### THE TIME AND OCCASION OF WRITING.

The date of the Epistle, as already shown, must probably be placed about A. D. 66, or 67, near the close of the apostle's life. The correspondencies in style and in the state of Christianity, as seen in the Pastoral Epistles, compel us to refer them to the same period. Where it was written, remains uncertain; it is variously referred to Macedonia and to Ephesus.

The island of Crete, or Candia, covers the southern entrance of the Archipelago, extending in length about one hundred and fifty miles, from Cape Salmone, on the east, to Cape Criumetopon, on the west; but in width varying from six to thirty-five miles. It is rocky and mountainous, with fertile valleys, producing cotton, olives, grapes, oranges, lemons, silk, and wool. The lofty form of Mount Ida appears about the middle of the island, rising to the height of seven thousand six hundred and seventy-four feet. Anciently Crete was crowded with cities and covered with a dense population, estimated at one million two hundred thousand. At present, its chief city is Candia, and the whole population of the island is about two hundred and ten thousand.

Crete is celebrated in ancient mythology especially as the place where Jupiter was born and buried. In the Trojan war, Idomeneus, king of Crete, embarked his troops in a fleet of eighty vessels, and led them in the long conflict. At a later period its chief cities became centres of little republics. The Cretan constitution and laws, originated by Minos, are said to have been the model from which many features of the constitution and laws of Lycurgus were derived. The island was subjected to Rome by Metellus, B. C. 67, and, at the time of Paul, was united to Cyrenaica, on the African coast opposite, forming one Roman province. In Paul's voyage to Rome, the vessel, sailing round Cape Salmone and under the lee of the island, reached Fair Havens, a harbor near the city of Lasea; and then, loosing thence, it attempted to reach Phenice, a port near the western end of the island. But a typhoon, rushing furiously down from Mount Ida, drove the ship out to sea, and after many days it grounded, a hopeless wreck, on the coast of Malta. The circumstances of Paul on this voyage plainly forbid the supposition that he performed much, if any, evangelical labor in Crete at this time.

Philo and Josephus both testify to the large number of Jews in Crete. Some of these were present in Jerusalem at the Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was given, and these received the gospel. It seems probable, therefore, that Christianity had been introduced into the island from this source before the visit of Paul. The gospel thus brought, however, would be in a very imperfect form, mixed with much misconception and error; and, coming through a wholly Jewish channel, the errors would be largely Jewish in character. Christianity, as thus introduced, would also be very imperfectly organized. The apostle, at his coming, would naturally seek to remedy these defects by a more complete unfolding of the gospel and a more perfect organization of the churches.

But the character of the Cretans, and especially of the Cretan Jews, rendered the task one of great difficulty. As a people they were noted for their fickleness, avarice, sensuality, licentiousness, and mendacity ; and they are thus characterized by even the heathen writers of that period. For some reason Paul is compelled to leave while in the midst of the work, and the difficult and delicate task of completing it was devolved on Titus. Consequently, the apostle, after his departure, writes this Epistle, at once to certify the authority of Titus as acting in the apostle's place in the superintendence of the work in Crete, and to give explicit directions to him respecting the manner of performing the duties of his position. In this, as in the Epistles to Timothy, the subjects treated belong, for the most part, to all ages, and have therefore a universal interest and importance. The Epistle was probably sent by the hands of Zenas and Apollos, to whom it served as a letter of introduction and commendation. (3 : 13.) Some, as Hofmann, regard this as the primary occasion of sending it ; but, as these persons are not mentioned till the close of the Epistle, and then only in a single verse, it seems more natural to think that Paul was moved to write it by the needs of Titus and the Cretan Christians, and simply availed himself of the journey of Zenas and Apollos as a favoring opportunity to send it to the island.

#### THE CONTENTS.

Like the other Pastoral Epistles, this is a personal, familiar letter, and is without formal plan. The leading topics occur in the following order :

*Chapter First.*—Address and greeting (1-4) ; directions to Titus as to church order, particularly the qualifications of elders (10-16) ; the Cretan false teachers described (5-9).

*Chapter Second.*—Titus is instructed how to apply the gospel to different classes in the church, as the aged, the young, and the slaves (1-10) ; the ground of the foregoing exhortations to holy living is shown in that the grace of God has for its end the sanctification of men (11-15).

*Chapter Third.*—The conduct to be required of Christians toward rulers and society in general (1, 2) ; the duty of showing such disposition and conduct toward others is enforced and illustrated by God's kindness and mercy to us (3-7) ; the doctrine of a gratuitous salvation is to be insisted on in order to incite believers to good works (8-11) ; closing directions and salutations, with the benediction (12-15.)



# THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

## CHAPTER I.

PAUL, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;

2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

1 Paul, a <sup>1</sup>servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

### Ch. 1 : 1-4. ADDRESS AND SALUTATION.

—1. After announcing himself as a servant of God and an apostle of Christ, he states that the object of his apostleship is to bring God's elect to the faith and to the full knowledge of the truth which leads to piety. (1.) 2. This object he prosecutes in view of the hope, for himself and all believers, of eternal life, which God, who cannot prove false, promised in Christ before eternal ages, but manifested in his own appointed times through preaching; which preaching, the apostle declares, was intrusted to him by the appointment of God. (2, 3.) 3. Addressing Titus as his true child in virtue of a common faith, he invokes on him grace and peace from God and Christ. (4.)

**1. Paul a servant of God**—an expression not elsewhere used by the apostle in opening his epistles, the more usual form being “a servant of Jesus Christ”; the fact may, perhaps, serve to attest the genuineness of the Epistle, since a forger would not be likely to depart from Paul's method in so conspicuous a place. **And an apostle of Jesus Christ**—presenting the special office and work of Paul as an apostle in distinction from his general position as a servant. **According to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledging (knowledge) of the truth, which is after godliness**—“with a view to subserve the faith of God's elect.” Compare Rom. 1 : 5: “for obedience to the faith.” Here the object of the apostleship is stated: it is to bring God's chosen to the faith and to the full knowledge of that truth which leads to godliness. (Acts 13 : 48; 18 : 9, 10.) This, which was pre-eminently the end of the apostolic office, is the grand end of the ministry; for preaching is God's appointed means of faith. (Rom. 10 : 14-17; 1 Cor. 1 : 21-24.) ‘God's elect,’ or, “the chosen of God.” “Acts 13 : 48 shows this—that

election is not in consequence of faith, but faith in consequence of election. Compare Eph. 1 : 4.” (Ellicott.) Though God's elect, their election only attains its end “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth” (2 Thess. 2 : 13); and hence the gospel must be proclaimed, and they must believe, in order to be saved (2 Tim. 2 : 10). The truth is ‘after (or, according to) godliness’—that is, it is not merely abstract, theoretical; but has a moral aim, leading men to practical godliness. It is not a mere philosophy, but a spiritual power, purifying and uplifting the life.

**2. In hope of eternal life**—“he fulfills his task with or in hope of eternal life.” That which he has in view in prosecuting the work of his apostleship is the hope, for himself and for all believers, of eternal life. This is the glorious goal set before him, and which, in leading men to faith and the full knowledge of the truth, he sets before them—eternal life secured in Christ. Faith and knowledge, in his view, “rested on a background of promise and hope, which, in a manner, stretched from eternity to eternity, having God's primeval promise for its origin, and a participation in his everlasting life for an end.” (Fairbairn.) **Which (eternal life) God that cannot lie, promised before the world began (eternal times)**—that is, as 2 Tim. 1 : 9, before the cycles, or ages, through which the world has passed, commenced; or in eternity, before time began. ‘Cannot lie’—a single word in the Greek (*ἀγένοης*), added to heighten the certainty of the result, as Heb. 6 : 18; compare Rom. 3 : 4; 11 : 29; 1 Cor. 1 : 9. The unchanging truth of God is the foundation of all hope. **Promised before eternal times**—as “chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world” (Eph. 1 : 4), God gave the elect, in solemn promise, to Christ as his redeemed people

3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;

4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

1 Or, *long ages ago*. . . . 2 Or, *its*. . . . 3 Or, *proclamation*.

and as co-inheritors with him of eternal life. (John 6:39; 10:29; 17:2, 6, 8, 11.) This promise, made to Christ in eternity is assured by the unchanging faithfulness of God; and resting on it as an absolute certainty, the apostle prosecuted his apostolic work, and to that promise directed the faith and hope of men. "If indeed Christ be 'the chosen of God,' the Surety and Representative of 'all who were given to him' (John 6:36-40; 17:1-3), eternal life was promised to him 'before the world was,' in consequence of his engagement to become incarnate and to be obedient even to the death of the cross." (Scott.) Others explain it as "a contracted expression for 'purposed before the world began' (literally, before the *ages of time*), and *promised* actually in time, the promise springing from the eternal purpose." (Fausset.) Thus, also, Alford and most interpreters.

**3. But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching**—or, *manifested in his own (appointed) times his word in the proclamation*. (Acts 1:7; 1 Tim. 6:15.) His word of promise of eternal life, made to Christ before eternal ages and hid through those ages in the mystery of the divine counsels, God manifested, published, in his own appointed times, "when the fulness of time was come"—that is, in the Gospel Dispensation. "Here again we have the same antithesis between the period of the revealed and the hidden mystery, as in Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:5. The time of this revelation is that which God fixed and arranged in his own wisdom. See, also, 1 Tim. 2:6; Gal. 4:4." (Van Oosterzee.)

**Which is committed unto me.** The proclamation, or preaching, with which Paul was charged, was the vehicle, or medium, through which this great promise of eternal life in Christ was manifested or published. The proclaiming of this he everywhere regards as his special trust from God. See Acts 20:24; 1 Cor. 9:16, 17; 2 Cor. 5:18-20; Gal. 1:15, 16; 1 Tim. 1:11. **According to the commandment of God our Saviour.** He did

3 lie, promised <sup>1</sup> before times eternal; but in <sup>2</sup> his own seasons manifested his word in the <sup>3</sup> message where-with I was intrusted according to the commandment of God our Saviour; to Titus, my true child after a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Saviour.

not preach on his own authority, but as one intrusted with a proclamation by the appointment of God. 'God our Saviour'—probably God the Father, according to the prevailing Pauline usage. (1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; Titus 2:10; 3:4; Jude 25.)

**4. To Titus, mine own son after the common faith**—or, *in virtue of a common faith*. 'Mine own,' genuine. (1 Tim. 1:2.) He was Paul's genuine son; by virtue, not of fleshly relationship, but of their sharing in a common faith. He was Paul's spiritual child, probably as having been led to Christ by him and as having thus been made a sharer of his faith. (1 Cor. 4:15; Philem. 10.) Titus was a Gentle; and in 'common faith' there is possibly allusion to the higher bond of unity by which this common faith in Christ bound them, though one was a Jew and the other a Gentle. (Gal. 5:6; Col. 3:11.) **Grace, mercy, and peace.** 'Mercy,' which occurs in the other Pastoral Epistles, is probably to be omitted here, as it is wanting in the Sinaitic, Ephraem, and other ancient codices, as also in important versions. It was probably interpolated to conform the passage to the others. (1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:3.) It is found, however, in the Alexandrian Codex.

**From God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.** 'Our Saviour,' used here only of Christ in an invocation, though often applied to him in other relations. "He applies the same epithet, *Saviour*, to the Father and to Christ, inasmuch as certainly each of them is our Saviour, but for a different reason; for the Father is our Saviour because he redeemed us by the death of his Son, that he might make us heirs of eternal life; but the Son, because he shed his blood as the pledge and price of our salvation. Thus the Son has brought to us salvation from the Father, and the Father has bestowed it through the Son." (Calvin.)

**5-9. THE APPOINTMENT OF ELDERS; QUALIFICATIONS TO BE REQUIRED IN THEM.**

—1. The apostle's purpose in leaving Titus in Crete; it was that he should further set in

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

order the churches, especially by the appointment of elders. (6.) 2. He prescribes the qualifications which must be required in elders, mentioning (a) the moral, or those pertaining to the character and life, and (b) the doctrinal, insisting especially on adherence to the sure, divinely taught word as necessary alike in exhorting believers and in convicting opposers. (6-9.)

**5. For this cause left I thee in Crete.** This large and populous island, the southernmost in the Grecian Archipelago, is now called Candia. Paul had labored here with Titus, but being obliged to leave, perhaps by the urgency of work in other fields, he left his assistant in the island to carry to completion the work they had begun. Of the time when this occurred we have no information; but as no allusion is made in the Acts to this visit to Crete, and as the style of the Epistle and the general circumstances indicated in it correspond in a remarkable manner to the First Epistle to Timothy, it must probably be referred to the same period, perhaps about A. D. 66 or 67. 'Left I thee' (behind). The expression does not imply the permanence of Titus' position there, but the reverse; and lends, therefore, no sanction to the tradition that Titus was "first bishop of the church of the Cretians," a wholly unfounded assumption. In fact, Titus was to remain there only till the coming fall or winter, and then come to Paul at Nicopolis (3:12), from which last place he probably accompanied the apostle to Rome, and thence went, not to Crete again, but to Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10). There is no evidence whatever, in or out of Scripture, that Titus was ever again in Crete. **That thou shouldest (further) set in order the things that are wanting.** Christianity had probably been introduced on the island a number of years before. Some Cretans had been present at the Pentecost. (Acts 2:11) Paul had stopped in Crete on his voyage to Rome (Acts 27:8,9.) It is likely, therefore, that Christians were living there; but the gospel, received in this incidental way, must have been very imperfectly understood. The churches, in their doctrinal knowledge, Christian life, and church organization, must have been far from

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee

complete, and must have required much additional instruction and training. This work Paul had begun, but, being called away, had left Titus behind to carry to completion.

**And ordain (appoint) elders in every city.** This was one of the "things that were wanting." There were Christian assemblies, doubtless with incipient forms of organization; but the churches needed to be fully organized and officered. The gospel becomes a permanent and aggressive power on earth only through the church, the divinely constituted organization, to which God has committed it, and through which it is appointed to act on men. The pietism which, in the professed interest of spiritual religion, undervalues the outward institutions of the gospel, finds no sanction in Scripture; on the contrary, the church, with its heaven-given ministry and ordinances, there stands in the foreground as God's agency for the conservation of his truth and the conversion of the world. (Matt. 18:15-17; Acts 14:23; Eph. 4:11, 12; 1 Tim. 3:15.) 'Ordain elders.' The word *ordain* here does not signify, as it is now technically used, to set apart for the ministry by an ordaining service, but simply to *institute, appoint*. How the elders were selected is not stated. In Acts 6:3, the selection of the Seven was made by the whole body of the disciples, and the appointment, or public setting apart to the office, was by the apostles. Thus also in Acts 14:23, Paul and Barnabas "ordained them elders in every church," where the word rendered *ordained* denotes "to appoint by causing to stretch forth the hand," and the meaning, according to Alford, Lange, Alexander, Barnes, and all the early English versions, is "ordained them elders by election in every congregation." In all cases of the appointment of church officers in the New Testament, so far as the process is indicated, the selection was made by the whole body of believers, and the formal setting apart was the function of the ministry. (Acts 1:15-26; 1 Cor. 16:2.) 'In every city,' or, *city by city*. Here was no diocesan episcopacy, but the church in every city has its own body of elders, each of whom is called in ver. 7 *bishop* (*ἐπίσκοπος*). **As I had appointed thee**—referring to directions orally given before the

6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

6 charge; if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children that believe, who are not accused of riot or unruly. For the <sup>1</sup> bishop must be blameless, as God's steward; not selfwilled, not soon angry, <sup>1</sup> no brawler, no striker, not greedy of filthy

1 Or, overseer.....2 Or, not quarrelsome over wine.

apostle left Crete. These directions required him not only to appoint elders in every city, but also to see that only persons of suitable character were appointed, men possessing the qualifications here mentioned. It is evident from this that not only were churches of divine institution, but also their organization took form in accordance with express divine directions. (1 Cor. 4: 17; 7: 17; 1 Tim. 3: 17.) Plainly, therefore, in the absence of inspired authorization of change, the constitution and order of the church, with its ministry and ordinances, remain the same as instituted by the apostles, and are of permanent obligation.

6. **If any be blameless**—unaccused, and giving no occasion for accusation. (1 Tim. 3: 10.) Moral qualifications are made in the New Testament of pre-eminent moment in the candidate for the ministry, because religious power depends on these. (1 Tim. 3: 7.) "This first word shows what in the apostle's estimate was mainly to be looked to; it is the moral estimation in which the person to be selected was held, the reputation which he had among men, on which above all he lays stress. For an efficient discharge of the duties of the office can be conceived of only on the supposition of a good reputation." (Wiesinger.) **The husband of one wife**—not having more than one living wife; of irreproachable marital relations. See note 1 Tim. 3: 2. **Having faithful children**—that is, those that are not only Christians, but are also orderly, consistent Christians, as the following context suggests. "Having a family well governed and well trained in religion." **Not accused of riot or unruly**—or, *who (the children) are not under accusation of profligacy, or of living riotously.* (Luke 15: 13; Eph. 5: 18; 1 Peter 4: 4.) 'Or unruly'—disobedient to parents, or to constituted authority. On this qualification in the presbyter's family, see 1 Tim. 3: 4. Inability to train and govern a family creates a presumption of inability to train and govern the church.

7. **For**—reason for the above qualifications

in the fact that he is God's steward. **The bishop**—or, *overseer*. He who is here called *bishop* (*επίσκοπος*) is plainly one of those called *elders* (*πρεσβύτεροι*) in ver. 5, the latter being the Hebrew and the former the Greek designation of the one officer. See the two words used interchangeably also. (Acts 20: 17, 28; 1 Peter 5: 1, 2.) "Hence it is evident they named the presbyters bishops." (Theodoret.) 'Bishop'—"here most plainly identified with the presbyters spoken of before." (Alford.) **Must be blameless as the steward of God**—that is, because he is God's steward. The pastor, as proclaiming the divine offers of mercy, is a dispenser of God's rich grace to men, and a minister for God in the church. Standing in a position so exalted and responsible, the nature of his office requires that he be unaccused and unaccusables. (Heb. 3: 2-6; 1 Peter 4: 10, 17.) "The greater the Master is, the greater should be his servant's virtues." (Bengel.) 'Steward'—one appointed by God over his house or family, the church. For the pastor, though chosen by the church, is not merely the servant of the church, but receives his appointment from God; and is 'the steward of God,' acting in his office by divine authority, and dispensing from God the bread of life to the people. (Luke 12: 42; 1 Cor. 4: 1, 2; 1 Tim. 3: 15.) **Not selfwilled**—not arbitrary, one who insists on having his own way. (2 Peter 2: 10.) "Describing a self-loving spirit, which in seeking only to gratify itself is regardless of others." (Elliott.) **Not soon angry**—not irascible, quick tempered, hasty in anger. **Not given to wine**—literally, *not with wine*. In a secondary sense, *one under the influence of wine*, and then, *one who acts with violence induced by wine; a brawler*. The word, if not absolutely prohibitory of wine, certainly requires temperance in the use of it. **No striker**—a violent man, one given to acts of bodily violence. **Not given to filthy lucre**—not one who would use the office for the accumulation of wealth, or "filthy lucre." (Ver. 11; 1 Tim. 6: 5; 1 Peter 5: 7.)

8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate:

9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainers.

8 lucre; but given to hospitality, a lover of good, sober-minded, just, holy, temperate; holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the <sup>1</sup>sound doctrine, and to convict the gainers.

1 Gr. *healthful*. . . . . 2 Or, *teaching*.

**8. But a lover of hospitality.** He now passes to the positive qualities required in a pastor; and first *hospitable*, as over against the narrow, sordid spirit which would grudge the expense of hospitality—a service specially necessary in that age, when the Christian traveler was exposed to peculiar difficulties and dangers, and a duty, therefore, which was often insisted on. See Rom. 12:13; 1 Tim. 3:2; Heb. 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9; 3 John 5.

**A lover of good men**—including, probably, all goodness, wherever found, whether in men or in deeds and things. (Phil. 4:8, 9.) **Sober**—having a sound, well-balanced mind, especially in practical life; “discreet,” “self-restrained.” **Just**—righteous, just as related to men; “upright in his dealings with all. A minister can do little good who is not.” (Barnes.) **Holy**—devoted to God, pure. The three words, sober, just, holy, present the three sides of human duty—duty to one’s self, duty to men, and duty to God; in all of these the minister is to show himself a true man. Compare ch. 2:12, where the three sides of life and character are similarly presented in the requirements to “live soberly and righteously and godly.” **Temperate**—or, *self-restrained*; men who hold under control their bodily appetites and passions; it refers not to chastity alone, but self-restraint in all things. (1 Cor. 9:25.) Compare on this catalogue of qualifications for the ministry, 1 Tim. 3:2-7, where the list is almost identical.

**9. Holding fast**—holding as against opposition, adhering to it, notwithstanding temptation to abandon it. (Matt. 6:24.) **The faithful word**—the trustworthy word, the word deserving of confidence. (1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:2; 3:8.) **As he hath been taught**—or, according to the teaching—that is, the word which accords with the inspired teaching, the gospel as taught by the apostles. (2 Tim. 1:13; 3:14.) **That he may be able by sound doctrine (teaching) both to exhort and to convince the gainers.** The apostle has in view the twofold duty of the pastor: first, to exhort believers, which exhortation is to be

in—that is, in the sphere of sound doctrine, as its element; and second, to reason with and convict opposers. The ability of the minister for both these functions depends on his personal adherence to the gospel as taught by the apostles. In this he is to stand fast. “He is the true bishop who holds the true faith, and who properly uses his knowledge to edify the people, and check the wantonness of the adversaries.” (Calvin.)

Note: The qualifications for the sacred office here required are, first, a sound moral character, healthy and symmetrical in its development, and strong in all the Christian virtues; and, second, a clear understanding and firm conviction of the Christian doctrines, with requisite ability and earnestness in teaching them. Without these qualifications, no man ought to be admitted to the ministry. It is the solemn duty of the church in electing to the ministerial office, and of the ordaining presbytery in setting apart to it, to ascertain the thorough soundness of the candidate in character and life, as well as in creed. No intellectual power or pulpit brilliancy can atone for the lack of solid Christian virtues and a blameless life.

**10-16. NECESSITY OF SUCH QUALIFICATIONS IN THE PASTORS SHOWN FROM THE CHARACTER OF THE FALSE TEACHERS AND OF THE CRETANS IN GENERAL.**—1. Many men have arisen who are insubordinate, vain-talkers, and deceivers, chiefly among professed converts from Judaism, and who must be silenced, since, by their false teaching, they are subverting whole families, for the sake of base gain. (10, 11.) 2. The Cretans are, in their general character, mendacious, brutal, and gluttonous, as he shows by the testimony of one of their own reputed prophets, which testimony he confirms as true: Titus is, therefore, to correct the people with severity, that they may possess moral health by means of the faith, and may not give heed to Jewish fables, and the commandments of men who turn away from the truth. (12-14.) 3. As these commandments of men enforced the

10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

12 One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

10 For there are many unruly men, vain talkers, and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for 12 filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, Cretans are always liars, evil beasts,

Jewish distinctions between outward things as clean and unclean, the apostle affirms that for the Christian no such distinctions exist, since purity and impurity, in any moral sense, do not belong to mere outward things, such as meats and drinks, but only to the soul. To the pure, therefore, all such things are pure, while to the impure nothing is, or can be, pure, since in them both mind and conscience are defiled; which also is seen in their character and conduct, since, while professing to know God, they practically deny him, being detestable in character, and morally incapable of any good work. (15, 16.)

10. **For**—he explains the necessity of these qualifications in the ministry, from the number and character of the opposers, referred to in the preceding verse, and especially from the character of the Cretans. **There are many unruly**—those who refuse subjection to church and pastoral authority and walk disorderly. The parties thus referred to seem to have been members of the church. **And vain talkers and deceivers**—men given to talk, making much of things of no moment, and seeking to deceive others. (3:9; 1 Tim. 1:6; 2 Tim. 3:13; Gal. 6:3.) **Specially they of the circumcision**—professed converts from Judaism, who insisted on the necessity of observing the Jewish ceremonial law, in addition to the precepts of the gospel. According to the testimony of Josephus and others, many Jews were at this time living in Crete, of whom doubtless numbers professed Christianity, or were in various ways connected with the (as yet) partially organized Christian assemblies.

11. **Whose mouths must be stopped**—be checked, or curbed, as an unruly beast is bridled, or muzzled. They were men who must be silenced by clear, conclusive, confutation and conviction, as Christ put to silence the Sadducees and Pharisees (Matt. 22:34, 46), and Paul confounded the Jews at Damascus. (Acts 9:22.) Compare 1 Tim. 1:3-7; 2 Tim. 3:1-9. **Who subvert whole houses**—or, *inasmuch as they are*, or, *as those who are*, subverting

whole households. Reason why their mouths must be stopped: their slanderous accusations and false doctrines were producing disastrous effects, so that entire families were being perverted from the truth. (2 Tim. 2:18.) **Teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.** The deceivers were, in this case, influenced, not by fanaticism or false zeal, but by sordid motives. Perhaps they made themselves popular by flattering Jewish prejudices, teaching the obligation of the Mosaic ceremonial law, and the superior dignity and privilege of those who could trace their genealogy back to Abraham; and thus secured a larger following and more ample support. (1 Tim. 3:3-8; 6:5.)

12. **One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said**—that is, one of the Cretans, of whose general characteristics, as a people, the apostle now speaks. He refers to Epimenides, of Gnossus, Crete, who lived about B. C. 600; a man of such distinction as a prophet and sage, that he is cited as an inspired man by Plato, Cicero, and other eminent writers. The first clause of the words here cited was found, also, in a hymn to Zeus by Callimachus, of Cyrene, B. C. 260. 'A prophet of their own'—that is, reputed among them as a prophet, and, being one of themselves, not likely to speak evil of them falsely. Paul quotes twice elsewhere from heathen authors (Acts 17:28; 1 Cor. 15:33), but nowhere mentions their names. **The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. Evil beasts**—“rude, savage, cunning, greedy.” ‘Slow bellies,’ or, *idle gluttons*, as in Revised Version, applied to persons who become corpulent through idleness and gluttony, and here directly designating the Cretans, because the belly was the chief object of their life. (Rom. 16:18; Phil. 3:19.) The character here given of the Cretans as a people is abundantly confirmed by Livy, Polybius, Plutarch, and Strabo, who testify to their mendacity, brutality, avarice, and idleness. The word, *To Cretize*, (*κρητιζειν*) signified among the ancients to lie, to deceive.

13 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;

14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

13 idle<sup>1</sup> gluttons. This testimony is true. For which cause reprove them sharply, that they may be sound<sup>2</sup> in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. To the pure all things are pure: but to them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bellies*. . . . . <sup>2</sup> Gr. *healthy*.

**13. This witness is true.** The apostle confirms Epimenides' words, as justly characterizing the Cretans as a people. Doubtless there were many individual exceptions, but these characteristics belonged to them as a nation. **Wherefore rebuke them sharply**—rather, *convict them sharply*, with clear, decisive proofs, and earnest, authoritative manner; referring “not so much to the heretics as the Cretans, who were exposed to their misleading influences.” Or, as Ellicott: “*Confute them, set them right, with severity; not the deceivers so much as the deceived.*” **That they may be sound** (healthy) **in the faith**—that is, that they may be in moral health, in virtue of, or, by means of, the faith. The gospel alone can keep them in moral health; Titus must, therefore, use sharpness, severity, in confuting and convicting them when necessary, to prevent their deception and their perversion from the truth. ‘In the faith’—“faith being the *sphere* which constitutes the centre and starting point of the entire internal and external life, and, therefore, if it is to be good, must be the seat of health.” (Van Oosterzee.)

**14. Not giving heed to Jewish fables.** Precisely what these were, it is not easy to ascertain. They are referred to (1 Tim. 1:4; 4:4) as “fables and endless genealogies,” “profane and old wives’ fables.” Here they are called “Jewish fables.” Thus of Jewish origin, they were possibly those popular speculations as to angels and aeons which, in a later age, took more clearly defined form as Gnosticism. Probably the deception (“always liars”) which characterizes the Cretans, inclined them to these idle fables. ‘Not giving heed’: men have not only no right to receive error, but they are under obligation, also, to avoid it, to give no heed to it. It must be shunned as a temptation and snare. For theoretical error always, sooner or later, leads to practical error, sin in heart and life; and the only purifying power in character and action is that heart faith which clearly apprehends and re-

ceives the truth. **And commandments of men that turn from the truth.** These commands related to abstinence from meats and drinks, and other observances, which the ceremonial law once prescribed: but which, as that law had been abrogated by the gospel, could now rest only on the commandment of men. Such restrictions and observances, also, had been greatly increased by “the tradition of the elders.” (Mark 7:1-13.) But all these, as obligations imposed on the conscience by man, were mere “will-worship,” intruding on the prerogatives of God and offensive to him (Col. 2:20-23); while, as the apostle proceeds to show, such distinctions in merely outward things, as meats and drinks, had no basis in the nature of things.

**15. Unto the pure all things are pure**—that is, all the outward things referred to, such as meats and drinks, to which these distinctions of pure and impure were applied. Whether these things are for us clean or unclean, the apostle says, depends, not on the things, but on us; if we are pure inwardly, purified in heart by faith (Acts 15:9), then all these outward things are for us pure, and are fitted for our use. “There is nothing unclean in itself.” (Rom. 14:14, 20; 1 Cor. 8:4-8.) Sin does not inhere in a thing, but in a moral personality; so that whether anything is for a man clean or unclean, depends on the heart of the man. “God made nothing unclean.” (Chrysostom.) Thus Christ said: “There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him; but the things which come out of him, these are they that defile the man.” (Mark 7:15; Matt. 15:10-20.) ‘All things’: not including, of course, willful error and acts forbidden by the moral law; the context plainly limits the words to things commonly regarded by Jews as ceremonially unclean, a distinction which had been done away, with the establishment of Christianity. (Acts 10:9-16.) **But unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure.** As it is the man and not the thing which determines its purity,

16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

16 are defiled. They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

it follows that to the impure nothing can be pure. "They have within a fountain of pollution which spreads itself over and infects everything about them. Their food and drink, their possessions, their employments, their comforts, their actions—all are in the reckoning of God tainted with impurity, because they are putting away from them that which alone has for the soul regenerating and cleansing efficacy." (Fairbairn.) **But even (both) their mind and conscience is defiled.** 'Mind' (*νοῦς*), the intellectual, rational nature, but considered as that which, through the affections, determines the volitions. It thus practically "includes the willing as well as the thinking part of man." (Delitzsch.) 'Conscience' (*συνείδησις*), the moral, self-reflective nature, which cognizes right and wrong. The two united present "the life stream in its outflow and its inflow together." (Beck.) The whole inner life is defiled. "And, therefore, uncleanness tainting their rational acts and reflective self-recognitions, nothing can be pure to them; every occasion becomes to them an occasion of sin, every creature of God an instrument of sin; as Mack well observes, 'the relation in which the sinful subject stands to the objects of its possession, or of its inclination, is itself a sinful one.'" (Alford.) See this fearful fact, the universal sinfulness of the unconverted man, stated in still more profound and solemn form, in Rom. 8:7, 8: "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can he. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Compare Eph. 2:1-3; Prov. 15:8; 21:4.

Note: Here, as elsewhere, a pure faith is made the essential condition of a truly pure life. The truth, believably apprehended, is that which makes the soul morally free. (John 8:31-36.) It renews the heart, the fountain of the moral life, and puts the man into living sympathy with God and with all that is true and pure and holy. (Rom. 6:2-11.) To such a soul, the things—mere meats and drinks, on which the Jews insisted as unclean—were not unclean: they did not and could not defile

him. "But the principle 'to the pure all things are pure' may be sadly abused, unless it is explained and limited by the principle stated by the apostle in 1 Tim. 4:4, 5. Since no one is absolutely pure, and even the best men are exposed to various temptations, there are, in the case of every man, things which, though in themselves innocent, might better be avoided by *him*: hence conscientious, daily self-observation, which is often attended by self-mortifying experience, is necessary to make us observant of those breakers which specially threaten us." (Van Oosterzee.)

**16. They profess that they know God.** This is their public profession; and it is so far true, that they do in fact have an outward knowledge of him, in this differing from the heathen, and being thereby in greater condemnation. **But in their works they deny him.** Their conduct is at variance with their profession of the knowledge of God, for they live as though they knew him not. **Being abominable, and disobedient**—or, *since they are abominable*, etc. In character they are 'abominable,' vile and detestable before God; in life they are 'disobedient,' disobeying the precepts of God's law, and and rejecting the grace of his gospel. (Ezek. 33:31; 1 Thm. 5:8; 2 Tim. 3:5.) **And unto every good work reprobate.** 'Reprobate' (*ἀδόκιμος*) applies to one who has been repeatedly and fully tested, and, in the testing process, has proved worthless. So these for every good work had been proved worthless. The opportunities and incentives to good works had been set before them, but they had chosen rather the evil; they were now, therefore, 'reprobate,' given up, as proved worthless. (Rom. 1:28; 1 Cor. 9:27; 2 Cor. 13:5-7; Heb. 6:8.) Life in the church is a probation, in which character is tested, and where, alas! many fail. As Judas, even in the company of apostles, and under the personal instruction of Christ, developed only in his evil nature, and fitted himself for perdition, and as Ananias and Simon Magus (Acts 5:1; 8:18), though under apostolic teaching, only revealed the wickedness that was in them; so, in all ages, there are men in the churches to whom religious privileges only prove the means of

## CHAPTER II.

**B**UT speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

1 But speak thou the things which befit the sound doctrine: that aged men be temperate, grave, sober-minded, sound in faith, in love, in patience; that aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers nor enslaved to much wine, teachers

1 Gr. *healthful*. . . . . 2 Or, *teaching*. . . . . 3 Gr. *healthy*. . . . . 4 Or, *steadfastness*.

demonstrating their evil character, and the intellectual knowledge of God only serves to evoke their real hatred to him and to fit them for destruction. They "profess that they know God, but in works they deny him"; and at the last, though they say, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have we not cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" he will then say unto them, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

(Matt. 7:15-27.)

**Ch. 2: 1-10. TITUS DIRECTED HOW TO INSTRUCT DIFFERENT CLASSES OF PERSONS IN THE CHURCH.**—Speaking the things that befit sound doctrine, he is charged to exhort: 1. Aged men, to a spirit and conduct befitting their age and experience. (2.) 2. Aged women, to a deportment such as becomes holy persons, that thus they may train the younger women in those virtues which shall confer blessing on the homes over which they preside. (3-5.) 3. The younger men, to sober-mindedness; seeking, also, to influence them by the example of good works furnished in his own life, and by the sincerity, gravity, and soundness of his discourse, thus putting to shame opposers. (6-8.) 4. Slaves, also, to submission, cheerful obedience, and fidelity to their masters, whereby they will adorn the doctrine of our Saviour God. (9, 10.)

**I. But speak thou.** In contrast with the false teachers before described. **The things which become (befit the) sound doctrine**—or, *healthy instruction*, the precepts of the gospel, obedience to which gives moral health. The duties he is to inculcate are to be such as *befit, are agreeable to, sound doctrine*, the simple, pure gospel. The errorists, "teaching things which they ought not" (1:11), dealt in subjects morally unprofitable, producing no fruits in holy living, but mere word strifes, and profitless speculations. Titus, on the

other hand, must enforce those solid virtues and practical duties which befit the gospel. These are indicated in what follows.

1, 2, 3. **DUTIES OF THE AGED.**

**2. That the aged men be sober** (circumspect)—literally, *temperate as it respects wine*; then, sober-minded, watchful in spirit and conduct. The word, doubtless, includes freedom from intemperance in strong drink, but here probably more than this, circumspection in all things. **Grave**—or, *dignified*; referring to their bearing and deportment, a manner befitting age and dignity. **Temperate.** In Revised Version, *sober-minded*. Involving the conception of a well-balanced, properly regulated mind. A person of discretion and sound judgment. (1:8; 1 Tim. 2:2.) **Sound** (healthy) **in faith, in love, in patience**—not morbid or fitful, in these qualities, but in the full, natural exercise of them. 'Patience,' or, enduring fortitude. Old age is the period of infirmities from the decay of the body, the season of loneliness from the loss of the friends of early life, who pass away by death; the age when life often seems a disappointment and failure, as one looks back on the unrealized hopes of youth. It is the blessed office of the religion of Christ at such a time to lift the soul above querulousness and murmuring and despair, and inspire it with patient resignation, heavenly fortitude, and ever brightening hope; and it is where this effect is produced in the actual life, the gospel shines forth in its highest glory before men. "Those who are full of years should be full of grace and goodness, the *inner man* renewing more and more as the *outer decays*." (Henry.)

**3. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness.** A general characterization, of which the following are specific points: 'Behavior,' or, demeanor. The word includes all that in the appearance, bearing, deportment, which manifests the inner life. Their outward do-

4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

5 *To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.*

6 Young men likewise exhort to be soberminded.

7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine *shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,*

8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

4 of that which is good; that they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be soberminded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed; the younger men likewise exhort to be soberminded: in all things shewing thyself an ensample of good works; in thy doctrine *shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed,*

meanor should befit and attest a reverent and devout heart. "That their very gait and motions, their countenance, their speech, their silence, may carry in them a certain decorous and sacred dignity." (Jerome.) "As becometh holiness"—or, holy-beseeming. Compare Eph. 5:3; 1 Tim. 2:10. **Not false accusers** (*slanderers*)—literally, *not devils*; calumniators, speaking evil of others. **Not given (enslaved) to much wine.** Forbidding bondage to the habit of using stimulants, a vice common among heathen women, and conspicuously so probably in Crete. (Rom. 6:16; 2 Peter 2:19; 1 Tim. 3:8, 11.) **Teachers of good things.** As the natural instructors of the younger women, they were to teach them, by precept and example, that which is good and u-eful. (Pr v. 31:1, 26.)

#### II. 4-8. DUTIES OF THE YOUNG, AND OF TITUS AS AN EXAMPLE.

**4. That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children. Teach . . . to be sober**, a single word in the Greek (*σωβηρίζω*)—literally, *make sober, or sober-minded*—then, train, or instruct with authority; probably used because of the authoritative relation of mothers to their daughters. The habitual example and teaching of mothers were thus to foster in the younger wives and mothers that love for husband and children which should bless the home life. Love is the highest blessing in an earthly home, and of this the wife and mother is the natural centre. The union and mutual love of husband and wife Scripture compares to that of Christ and the Church; and the gospel everywhere blesses and dignifies the family, exalting all the natural relations, and making the home life helpful to the life of holiness. (Eph. 5:22-33.)

**5. To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home** (*occupied in home duties*)—the virtues of the true wife, which shed sweetness and grace on the home. These the mothers are to

cultivate in their daughters, and thus fit them to carry blessing to the homes over which they shall preside. The Christian mother thus multiplies and perpetuates her usefulness in the homes of her children. 'Keepers at home.' Most of the best manuscripts, as the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, Ephraem, have *workers at home* (*οικονύμοις*), a reading adopted by Lachmann, Alford, Tischendorff, Westcott and Hort, and the Revisers. **Obedient** (*being in subjection*) **to their own husbands.** Compare, as illustrating and emphasizing the sanctities of home life, and the subordination of the different members of the family to its head, Eph. 5:13, 14, 22-24; Col. 3:18; 1 Peter 3:1-6. **That the word of God be not blasphemed** (*evil spoken of*). The domestic virtues in the character of the younger wives would commend the gospel to their husbands and to the world, and men observing its power in giving grace and beauty to their lives would be won to it. (Matt. 5:16; 1 Peter 3:1, 2.)

**6. Young men likewise exhort to be soberminded**—or, *to be discreet.* They are to cultivate sober thoughtfulness, practical wisdom, self-restraint; a thorough self-government, in which all the faculties and appetites and passions are under the control of a sound judgment and an enlightened conscience.

**7, 8. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works.** As a minister, and as still in comparative youth, his own spirit and life would be influential with the younger men; and he was required to be, therefore, in his own person a fitting model for them; and this, not in some things, but in *all things.* The duty of the minister to be a pattern, a model, for the people is one of the plain teachings of Scripture. (1 Cor. 11:1; 2 Thess. 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Peter 5:3.) **In doctrine** (*thy teaching*) **shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned.** His teaching was to be marked, first, in its spirit, as incorrupt, thoroughly

9 *Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;*

10 *Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*

9 having no evil thing to say of us. *Exhort*<sup>1</sup> servants to be in subjection to their own masters, and to be well-pleasing *o them* in all things; not gainsaying; 10 not purloining but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservants*.

sincere and earnest; second, in its manner, as serious, dignified, not rhetorical, sensational, flippant; and third, in its substance and form, as healthful in the pure, life-giving doctrines and duties inculcated, and in the simple, fitting words with which it is clothed; thus avoiding all that the serious hearer could condemn. 'Sincerity'—in all the older manuscripts this word is wanting; most critical editors omit it from the text. **That he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.** When the life of the preacher is an example of good works, and his teaching is in spirit sincere, in manner reverent, and in substance true, the opposer finds nothing to criticise, and is plainly without reason in his opposition. He is thus disarmed. It is the obvious duty of the minister, as respects his life and work, to avoid, with all possible care, any just cause for censure or criticism, that the gospel may not suffer through imperfection either in his life or in his sermons; and though he may not always thus silence opposition, since men are by nature opposed to God, he will nevertheless commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God (2 Cor. 4:2); and he who has the consciences of the people on his side is likely in the end to win their hearts. Even if he fail to win, he is, by such a ministry, "pure from the blood of all men" (Acts 20:26).

### III. 9, 10. DUTIES OF CHRISTIAN SLAVES.

**9. Exhort servants (slaves) to be obedient unto their own masters.** The immense number of slaves in the Roman Empire in the apostolic age, and the spiritual freedom and equality which the gospel proclaimed to all in the church, made the frequent repetition of this injunction necessary. See note, 1 Tim. 6:1, and compare Eph. 6:5; 1 Peter 2:18. The gospel gave spiritual freedom, but it did not teach communism. It left the civil relations of life as they existed (1 Cor. 7:20-24), but it spiritually exalted and ennobled them, making the slave the Lord's freeman, and exalting the service done the master into a holy service done for Christ. So far from

inciting insubordination, it taught the slave to render all the more cheerful service to the master, since in so doing he was serving and honoring Christ. **And to please them well in all things; not answering again**—they should study to make their service acceptable to the masters, especially avoiding a contrary spirit, or the disposition to set up their own will against the will of the master. 'Not answering again,' *not gainsaying, or, contradicting.* It is obvious that 'all things' is here limited to things not contrary to God's law, according to the principle, "we ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29.)

**10. Not purloining.** Compare Acts 5:2, 3. Petty stealing or purloining has always been a vice of slavery; it is a natural temptation of men who serve without formal wages, and conceive their master's property as in some sense their own. **But shewing all good fidelity.** The Christian slave is to resist this temptation, and, instead of yielding to this common vice, is to present a marked contrast by showing all good fidelity. His trustworthiness and integrity are to stand unimpeachable. 'Fidelity' (*πιστεύω*): the only instance (if it be one) of the word in this sense in the Pastoral Epistles. The parallel passages suggest, even here, the usual sense of *faith*; *showing all good faith*—that is, manifesting in their service all the effects of faith. The service rendered to their masters should be a service of faith, done "unto the Lord and not unto men," "in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord," remembering that they "serve the Lord Christ," and looking for their reward from him. (Col. 3:22-25; Eph. 6:5-8.) **That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.** The Christian slave is to honor the doctrine of God, the author of his salvation, by seeking to please his master, and showing perfect fidelity to his master's interests; thus manifesting in his character and life the excellence and power of the religion he professed. "God deigns to receive an 'ornament' from slaves, whose condition was so mean and low, that they were wont to be

11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, | 11 all things. For the grace of God <sup>1</sup> hath appeared, |

<sup>1</sup> Or, *hath appeared to all men, bringing salvation.*

scarcely accounted men: for he does not mean 'servants' such as we have at the present day, but slaves who were bought with money, and held as property, like oxen and horses. And if the life of these men is an ornament to the Christian name, much more let those who are in honor take care that they do not stain it by their baseness." (Calvin.)

Note: A Christian's duty and usefulness lie exactly in, not outside of, the station in which God has placed him. The aged, the young, the slave, each in his own place, by fidelity to the duties of his station, will most effectively set forth the power and excellence of the gospel. The slave may serve Christ as truly and honorably as the master: it is not the place, but fidelity to the duties of the place, which finds honor before God. The Christian, therefore, is not restlessly to seek change of station, but to give all diligence to fulfill the duties of the station he occupies. No sermon is so effective as a life true to its own place and its own work. Its appeal to the conscience and the heart, though it be silent, is irresistible; and however humble the sphere of such a life, before it mere intellectual skepticism shrinks away refuted and ashamed. For the religion which exalts and ennobles actual life must be the religion of God.

Note, also, the emphasis here placed on ethical and practical preaching. The pulpit is not to present mere abstract doctrine, and leave the people to draw their own inferences as to the duties of every-day life. On the contrary, it must give plain, practical instruction, adapted to all ages and classes of hearers, as to the spirit and conduct incumbent on them as disciples of Christ. The conscience of the people is to be educated, and thus the life lifted into a higher sphere of thought and action. Above all, the character and life thus inculcated in the pulpit, are to find a distinct exemplification in the preacher himself. He will thus silence opposition, and make his words irresistible in their power over the conscience and the heart. (Rom. 2: 21; 1 Tim. 4: 12, 16.) Paul enforced his preaching by personal example, saying to his hearers: "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and un-

blamably we behaved ourselves among you." (1 Thess. 2: 10.)

**11-15. GROUND OF THE FOREGOING EXHORTATIONS TO HOLY LIVING: THE GRACE OF GOD HAS FOR ITS END THE SANCTIFICATION OF MEN.**—1. God's grace in the gospel, which brings salvation to all men, was manifested as training us to this end—namely, (a) that we should renounce impiety and all worldly lusts; (b) that, having thus renounced sin, we should live soberly and justly and piously in the present world; and (c) that, as an incentive to such a life, we should ever be looking forward to the blessed hope, even the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus. (11-13.) 2. Our sanctification was the purpose in Christ's death for us: he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify for himself a people peculiarly his own, distinguished by zeal for good works. (14.) 3. These things—namely, the duties of the several classes in the church, set forth, ver. 1-10, and the motives thereto, ver. 11-14—Titus is enjoined to teach; and, in the case of the erring and wayward, he is to administer rebuke with all authority, suffering no one to despise him. (15.)

**11. For**—introducing the ground of the preceding exhortations; holiness is the end sought by the gospel, and Titus is, therefore, to urge it on these classes in the church. **The grace of God**—the free, unmerited favor of God to sinful men; grace, which was before hidden (Eph. 3: 1-9), but is now revealed in the coming and work of Christ. **That bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men**—better, as Revised Version, *hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men*—that is, salvation adapted to and offered to all men; not necessarily effectual for all men, since its power actually to save in any individual case is plainly conditioned on personal faith. (John 3: 16-18.) "That grace of God whereby alone it is possible for mankind to be saved." (Beveridge.) He emphasizes the universal offer of the gospel, as a reason for applying it to all the different classes of men before mentioned. Compare 1 Tim. 2: 4; 4: 10.

12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

12 bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly 13 in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and Christ:

1 Or, *age*. . . . . 2 Or, *of our great God and Saviour*.

**12. Teaching us.** The Greek word here, (*παιδεύσα*), as used in the New Testament, has no exact equivalent in the English. It is more than teaching; rather, *exercising, training*. Men are depraved, sinful; and the gospel, in its requirements of self-denial, resistance of temptation, holy self-discipline, is conceived as an educative, disciplinary power, and as, through its discipline, delivering us from sin and working in us holiness. (1 Cor. 11: 22; Heb. 12: 6.)

**That**—introducing the purpose or end of the training or discipline of the gospel. **Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts**—the means through which sanctification, the end designed by the gospel, is secured. The denying of impurity and inordinate earthly desires, or the firm resistance of the tendencies to evil within us, is an essential condition of salvation. For salvation does not consist only in a *change of relation to God*, in justification, pardon, adoption, but also in a *change of character in us*, in regeneration, sanctification, and holy living. Jesus saves his people *from their sins*; and this salvation, though all of grace, is not passively received, as if the soul were a mere recipient, but is actively appropriated through strenuous, persistent conflict with evil within itself. Hence the Christian life is represented as one of perpetual conflict. (Luke 9: 23; Rom. 6: 12, 13; 8: 13; Eph. 6: 10-18; Col. 3: 5.)

‘Worldly lusts’—literally, *the worldly lusts*—that is, *all* worldly lusts, or inordinate desires, such as the world cherishes. (Eph. 2: 1-3.)

**We should live soberly, righteously, and godly**—in these three words the language, perhaps without intending to define strictly, points out the three chief lines of human duty: first, the duty we owe ourselves, in maintaining a well-balanced mind, a self-governed, self-regulated spirit and life; second, the duty we owe to our fellow men, in a life of truth and justice and equity toward them; and third, the duty we owe God, in a life of piety, supremely devoted to him. This is the moral goal of Christian living, the grand end the gospel seeks to reach in its teaching and discipline. “Three words express the whole of

Christianity: to be strict toward oneself, just to one’s neighbor, and pious toward God. If thou livest thus, dear Christian, thou livest right.” (Starke.) (Deut. 10: 12; Ecc. 12: 13; Micah 6: 8; Matt. 22: 34-39.) **In this present world**—or, *present age*, as distinguished from the future life, and especially regarded as an evil, sinful age. “*In this world*—because the Lord has appointed life for the trial of our faith.” (Calvin.)

**13 Looking for that blessed hope**—‘hope,’ not subjective, but objective, put for the thing hoped for, as Acts 24: 15; Rom. 8: 24, 25; Gal. 5: 5. **And the glorious appearing** (*the appearing of the glory*). As an incentive to such a holy life. Christians have a blessed object of hope; they are awaiting, expecting, the manifestation of the glory; namely, that which shall be made at the second appearing of the Lord Jesus; which, as completing his redemption, is the highest and most glorious object of hope set before the Christian. In this life, he has only the beginnings of salvation; but he is expecting to share in the glory of God (Rom. 5: 2), and his eye is fixed on Christ’s second coming, as the epoch of “the adoption; to wit, the redemption of our body”; when his salvation, now only begun, will reach its glorious completion, in the redemption and glorification of his whole nature. (Rom. 8: 18-26; 1 Cor. 1: 7; Phil. 3: 20, 21; 1 Thess. 1: 9, 10; 2 Tim. 4: 8; Heb. 9: 28; 1 Peter 1: 13.) “The living as Christians, soberly, righteously, and godly, is thus *grounded* in faith in the appearing of grace (ver. 11), and is *strengthened* by the hope of another appearing; namely, of glory.” (Van Oosterzee.) **Of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.** Whether ‘great God’ is here a designation of Christ or of God the Father, is a question still in debate. I regard it as designating Christ for the following reasons: 1. The translation, “our Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ,” though not absolutely necessary, is in every way grammatically the more natural. 2. The following context, in the relative clause (ver. 11), “who gave himself for us,” plainly relates

14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

14 our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works.

only to Christ, but naturally requires us to take the whole preceding expression, 'our Great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ,' as its antecedent. 3. The evident purpose is to emphasize the greatness of what he gave when he gave himself; it would, therefore, be entirely natural to present here the supreme divinity of his nature, as *our Great God*. 4. The designation of Christ as God accords with the analogy of other Scriptures (Isa. 9:6; John 20:28; Rom. 9:5; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:8); while a passage very similar in sense and construction to this occurs in 2 Peter 1:11, "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." 5. The Fathers, both Greek and Latin, with rare exceptions, so understood it, as do by far the larger number of modern expositors, as Calvin, Tholuck, Olshausen, Wiesinger, Ebrard, Van Oosterzee, Hofmann, Fairbairn, Ellicott, and Wordsworth. Others, as De Wette, Huther, and Alford, dissent, but, though referring the words to God the Father, they, for the most part, insist that the passage is a strong testimony to the supreme divinity of Christ, because of the intimate association in it of Christ with the Father.

**14. Who gave himself for us.** Christ 'gave himself'; his offering was purely voluntary (John 10:11-18; 17:19); and it was nothing less than *himself*, his own divine human personality—"Himself, his whole self, the greatest gift ever given." (Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:25.) 'For us'; the preposition does not necessarily signify *instead of*, but only, *in behalf of*; but in this context, where it is said, *he gave himself . . . to redeem*, and consequently, as the ransom price, it is impossible to exclude the idea of a substitution of himself for us. (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; 3:18.) **That he might redeem us from all iniquity.** 'Might redeem' (*λυτρώσηται*); might free us by means of a ransom paid. (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; Eph. 1:7.) 'Iniquity' (*ἀνομία*, *lawlessness*; whatever in us is unconformed, or opposed, to the divine law. Thus, in Rom. 6:14, *sin* (*ἀμαρτία*), is, in like manner, conceived as a master, holding the soul in bondage, but from whose control Christ frees us. The apostle speaks here of a redemption, not from the condemnation, but from the

power of sin, from sin as an active, controlling principle within us. The two cannot, however, be disjoined, except in thought; for sanctification, or deliverance from the sin-power, is everywhere represented as a result of justification, or deliverance from condemnation. See especially Romans, chapters 6 and 7. This redemption *from all iniquity*, lawlessness, has as its final result perfect conformity to law; "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:4.) **And purify unto himself a peculiar people** (*a people for his own possession*), **zealous of good works**—or, *a people peculiarly his own*. 'Peculiar'—the Common Version is unfortunate here, as giving by this word the idea that Christians are to be *peculiar* in the sense of being unlike others, whereas the thought is, that they, in a special or peculiar sense, belong to Christ, and that the badge of his ownership in them is their zeal for good works. As Israel in the Old Testament are represented as God's chosen people, his peculiar treasure (Exod. 19:5, 6; Deut. 7:6; 14:2), so in the New Testament Christians are Christ's special people, given to him by the Father (John 6:37; 17:6-8), forming the body of which he is the head (Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18), and made to him "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a *peculiar people*," that is, a people specially his own. (1 Peter 2:9.) "Christ Jesus, our Great God and Saviour, redeemed us to himself, in order that he might make a Christian people peculiar to himself, who should then indeed be peculiarly his, if they proved to be zealous of good works." (Jerome.) "Here, also, as in Eph. 5:25-27, Paul brings forward the thought, that atonement for sin in itself, although the first, is by no means the last and the highest end of the sacrifice of Christ, but becomes the means, further, for the attainment of a higher, yea, the highest end, the sanctification of the pardoned sinner, and his renewal after the glorious image of God." (Van Oosterzee.) He came, not only to deliver us from all condemnation, but also, through this deliverance, to purify us from all sin; hence the evidence that we are Christ's own is

15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

15 These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

### CHAPTER III.

**P**UT them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.

2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

1 Put them in mind to be in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work, to speak evil of no man, not to be contentious, to be gentle, shewing all meekness toward

1 Gr. commandment.

that we bear his moral likeness and walk in his steps. ‘Zealous of good works.’ ‘Whoever is confident in him as our Saviour, who gave himself for us, should also be zealous of good works, since this was the purpose for which he gave himself for us; and whoever lives in the hope that he will reveal himself as our God in glory, he should show by his conduct in this present time that he is awaiting such a revelation of him, who for such a purpose gave himself for us.’ (Hofmann.)

**15. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority.** ‘These things’—the duties mentioned in verses 1-10. ‘Speak, and exhort’—the general duty of Titus toward all his hearers. ‘Rebuke’—a special duty toward the careless and disobedient. ‘With all authority’—or, authoritativeness—that is, with all the authority belonging to his office, “with every sort of imperative earnestness, as of one having a right to enjoin.” **Let no man despise thee**—do not suffer thy authority to be despised. Here the thought is, not as 1 Tim. 4:11, “Let no man despise thy youth”—that is, give no occasion to any one to despise thee, but rather, do not permit thy authority to be disregarded; insist firmly on obedience. The reason for this injunction to self-assertion probably lay in the Cretan character, which could be best influenced by authority. “Mere doctrine is not enough. Thou must exhort and rebuke with all earnestness, and not suffer thyself to be despised.” (Hedinger.)

**be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates.** The direction is designed to cover all the Christian’s relations to the State, whether to the supreme government, to governors, or to others in subordinate authority; in all these relations, he is to maintain the attitude of subjection; except when obedience to human authority would be disobedience to God; and even then, while declining to obey, he is to submit to the penalty. (Acts 4:19, 20; 5:29.) Insubordination to civil authority, especially to the hated Roman dominion, was a common temptation of the Jews, as the frequent and bloody insurrections of that period show. It is said to have been especially common among the Cretans, who had formerly lived under democratic institutions, and who, since the subjection of the island to Rome, b. c. 67, had engaged in frequent and bloody rebellions. (Polybius II.46.) This was also a false charge made against Christians, and was a not unfrequent pretext for their persecution. Hence the more urgently Christ and the apostles enjoin on them a quiet submission to the powers that be. (Mat. 22:21; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2; 1 Peter 2:13-17.) **To be ready to every good work**—prompt and hearty in obedience to every righteous law, and in doing what befits loyal citizens and good men. To those so doing, rulers are not a “terror,” rather, they are “for the praise of them that do well.” (Phil. 4:8.)

**2 To speak evil of no man.** This does not refer to speaking evil of rulers only (Acts 23:5; 2 Peter 2:10; Jude 8), but forbids indulgence in slander or evil speaking of any one. It prohibits all uncharitable talk. (Prov. 17:9; Eph. 4:29-32; Col. 3:8; James 1:26; 4:12; 1 Peter 2:1; 3:9; Jude 9.) **To be no brawlers—not to be contentious**—not quarrelsome, or disposed to dispute or wrangle. (1 Tim. 3:3.) **But gentle**—the word signifies to be moderate in one’s passions, fair, equitable; then to be forbearing, clement. (Phil. 4:5; 1 Thes. 3:3; James 3:17.) **Showing all**

**Ch. 3:1, 2. THE CONDUCT TO BE REQUIRED OF CHRISTIANS IN THEIR RELATIONS TO GOVERNMENT AND TO SOCIETY.**—Titus is enjoined to remind them—1. To subject themselves to the civil authorities; and, 2. To exercise the virtues of good citizens and healthful members of society.

**1. Put them in mind**—as of a duty already known, but in danger of being forgotten. **To**

3 For we ourselves also were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared.

**meekness (gentleness) to all men.** (1 Cor. 4: 21; Gal. 6:1.) The believer, in all the relations of life, is to be, in spirit and bearing, gentle, kind, considerate; and this, not to friends only, but to all classes of men.

**3 - 7. SUCH DISPOSITIONS AND CONDUCT TOWARD OTHERS, ENFORCED AND ILLUSTRATED BY GOD'S KINDNESS AND MERCY TO US.—1.** We ourselves were once, like others, foolish and sinful, enslaved to pleasures and lusts, and filled with unholly dispositions; yet God's kindness and love to man was manifested in saving us. (3, 4.) 2. This salvation had its source, not in works wrought in righteousness by us, but solely in God's mercy; it was made effectual for us by means of the regeneration and renewal effected by the Holy Spirit; and it has for its end, to make us, through our justification by God's grace, heirs according to the hope of eternal life. (5-7.)

**3. For we ourselves also**—as a reason for this forbearance and gentleness toward others, he now cites their own former character and life in sin, and the forbearance and kindness of God to them; but using the first person, he includes in the statement himself and all Christians, while in the old, sinful life. See the similar contrast between the Christian's past and present state, especially Eph. 2: 2-13, but also, Rom. 6: 17; 11: 30; 1 Cor. 6: 11; Eph. 4: 17-24; 5: 8; Col. 1: 21; 3: 7, 8. **Were sometimes (once) foolish**—without spiritual understanding, or the true knowledge of spiritual things; “having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.” (Eph. 4: 18.) **Disobedient**—that is, to God, as the thought now turns to spiritual relations. This is the attitude of the natural heart toward God; “the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” (Rom. 8: 7.) **Deceived**—or, *led astray*, from God and rectitude. (2 Tim. 3: 13; Matt. 18: 12; 1 Tim. 3: 6; 1 Peter 2: 25.) **Serving (as slaves) divers lusts and pleasures.** The service to these was slavery. They were

3 all men. For we also were aforetime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our

impelled, driven by their own lusts and pleasures, as the slave is driven by a master. (Rom. 6: 16; 16: 18; Eph. 2: 3; 2 Tim. 3: 6.) **Living in malice and envy**—as their habitual dispositions, the element in which their lives moved. They meditated and sought evil to others, and grudged and fretted at the good others possessed. (Eph. 4: 31; Col. 3: 8; 1 John 3: 12.) **Hateful and hating one another**—with characters and dispositions such as to awaken, and keep active, hatred one to the other. In social life, as man was related to man, instead of mutual sympathy, there was mutual repulsion, thus dissolving the very bonds of society. These fearful results of sin, as seen in heathenism, are more fully depicted in Rom. 1: 29-32.

**4. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared.** ‘Kindness’ (*χρηστότης*)—goodness practically manifested, benevolence shown in act. (Rom. 2: 4; 11: 22; Eph. 2: 7.) ‘Love toward man’ (*ψιλανθρωπία*)—love as specially exercised toward men; a quality ascribed to men (Acts 28: 2), and elsewhere in the New Testament only used here. The two words are here closely related, and are intended to place God, in his dispositions and conduct toward man, in contrast with sinful men, who live (ver. 3) in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. The argument is: “The goodness and love of God to man, on which our salvation is based, should lead us to show benevolence and gentleness to all men.” (Huther.) If God showed such kindness and love to men as he has manifested in saving us, we also ought to show kindness and love to all men: John 3: 16; 1 John 4: 7-12; compare Matt. 18: 32, 33. ‘God our Saviour’—here, as elsewhere in these epistles, God the Father, as the Author or Source of our salvation: 2: 13; 1 Tim. 1: 1; compare 2 Cor. 5: 18; 1 John 4: 9. “The whole of the passage which now follows has a great similarity with ch. 2: 11-14, and yet has a character entirely its own. There the apostle, in order to stimulate to Christian devotion, exhibited the holy aim of the redemption which men obtain through Christ; here, on the other hand, in contrast with the entire

**5** Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Saviour, and his love toward man, appeared, not by works *done* in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the<sup>1</sup> washing of regeneration<sup>2</sup> and renew-

<sup>1</sup> Or, *laver*. . . . . <sup>2</sup> Or, *and through renewing*.

unworthiness of unbelievers, he dwells upon the grace shown to them, in order to incite them to a gratitude which shall first of all manifest itself in love toward those who have not yet attained the priceless privileges of believers." (Van Oosterzee.)

**5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done**—that is, not by *virtue of*, or *consequence of*, our works. The pronoun "we" is emphatic; he did not save us because of, or on the ground of, righteous works that *we* did. Righteous works performed by *us* were not the meritorious cause, nor the influencing motive of his saving us. "Of (*in*) righteousness"—the sphere, or element, of the works denied. *Which we did*—not "have done," as the Common Version. The aorist form of the verb makes the denial of merit in us, as the ground of his saving us, universal; it was not our works, either already done, or foreseen as to be done by us, that moved him to save us. **But according to his mercy he saved us**— "after the measure of, in pursuance of, after the promptings of" his mercy. The real ground of his saving us was in himself, not in us. The mercy of God—his own, self-moved, spontaneous compassion, apart from all deserving in us—originated and wrought our salvation. "*He saved us*; not for foreseen works of ours, but of his own free grace and mercy alone. Works must be in the saved (where is room for them), but not among the causes of salvation; they are the way to the kingdom, not the meriting price of it; all is upon the footing of undeserved favor from first to last. Election is of grace; we are chosen to be holy, not because it was antecedently seen that we should be so. (Eph. 1:4)" (Henry.) Compare 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 2:8. Observe, nothing is here said of faith as a condition of salvation, because the apostle is speaking of salvation wholly on its divine side, as originating, not in response to something existing in, or done by, man, but entirely within God himself, springing spontaneously from his mercy. (Rom. 3:20, 24; Eph. 2:3-10.) **Through the washing of regeneration.** The apostle now states the divine acts by

which the salvation, thus originated, is made effectual to men; namely, the regeneration and sanctification of the soul; divine acts, which, like the salvation itself, are prompted, not by men's deserving, but by God's preventient grace. "Washing" (*λούτρόν*)—found in the New Testament only here and in Eph. 5:26; literally denotes a bath, either (1) the place or water in which a bath is taken, or (2) the act of bathing or washing, as Eccles. 31:30. See Lexicons of Cremer, Robinson, Thayer's Grimm's Wilke. It probably has allusion here to the immersion which took place in baptism, either to the laver, or place, in which that was performed, or to the act of baptism itself. "A reference to baptism, which might all the more easily be exhibited as a *laver* (*λούτρόν*), since it was originally performed by the entire submersion of the person baptized." (Van Oosterzee.) "Regeneration" (*παλιγγενεσία*), which is used only here and in Matt. 19:28, signifies a *re-birth*. Here it is applied to the *re-birth* of the soul, as John 3:3, 5, "born again"; in the other passage, it relates to the re-birth of external nature which will take place at the Second Coming of Christ, when the earth itself, as well as redeemed man, shall be delivered from the weakness and pollution of sin, and shall be changed into the purity and splendor which befit his everlasting kingdom.

The question to be raised on this passage is: Does the apostle use the term "washing" literally, to designate the outward rite of baptism, and thus affirm that this rite is the instrument of regeneration? Or is it used figuratively, the sign being put for the thing signified, the outward washing of water for the inward cleansing of the Holy Spirit? The latter interpretation, according to which the words present the divine act of the Spirit in regeneration, seems to me an absolute exegetical necessity. For 1. The apostle is speaking here, not of human acts, but exclusively of the divine impulsion and the divine acts in the matter of man's salvation. To interpolate into this series of divine acts, or to identify with any one act of this series a purely human act,

such as the outward rite of baptism, would be utterly inconsistent with the whole scope of the passage. The literal interpretation, therefore, would contravene a plain, exegetical law. 2. In the related passage (Eph. 5:25, 26), Paul, when speaking of Christ's love for the church, says, according to the Revised Version, he gave himself up for it, that he might sanctify it, *having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word* (*καθαρίσας τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ ὄντος ἐργάσατο*). Here the words "having cleansed it by the washing of water" are qualified by the appended clause, "with the word," clearly showing that baptism is referred to only as the outward symbol of an inward cleansing, effected by means of the divine word, as elsewhere it is said of Christians that they are "born again by the word of God." (1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18.) He thus carefully guards against the idea that the inward cleansing, or regeneration, is effected by the outward baptism. 3. It is evident, also, that all those passages which require regeneration prior to baptism forbid the interpretation here that baptism is the instrument or means of regeneration. The apostolic commission directs the ministry first to disciple, and then to baptize (Matt. 28:19); and this order is never reversed in the New Testament, but is constantly exemplified in the apostolic history. (Acts 2:41; 8:12.) Regeneration, therefore, precedes baptism, and cannot be an effect of it. 4. The conception of an outward rite, either as in itself effecting a spiritual change, or as efficiently conveying divine grace, is strongly condemned by Scripture. Paul, in his great argument against the Jewish ritualists (Rom. 2) closes with these words: "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God"—a passage which denies, in the most positive manner, that a mere outward rite has power, either in itself or as a means, to impart spiritual character to the soul, or to change a man's relations to God. 5. The one condition of salvation in the New Testament is personal faith in Christ, a spiritual, not a ritual condition. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," is God's word. Christ does, indeed, say: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved";

but he immediately adds—not, he that is not baptized shall be lost, but, "he that *believeth* not shall be damned." He thus clearly shows that salvation is necessarily connected, not with baptism, but with faith; a grace that presupposes regeneration. (John 3:14, 16; 6:35 11:25, 26; 1 John 5:1.) 6. The facts of experience, also, show that baptism has no power to regenerate; for many baptized persons, not only give no evidence of a regenerate character, but furnish the most palpable evidence to the contrary. Finally, baptismal regeneration, in whatever form held, has proved one of the most fatal errors in the history of Christianity. It is precisely the doctrine of ancient Phariseism, which regarded circumcision as insuring salvation, even irrespective of the personal character; and its necessary effect, as all history has shown, is to destroy in men's souls a sense of the need of that great spiritual change which is wrought alone by the Holy Spirit, and of which the Lord spake when he said, **YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.** Evidently, then, 'the washing of regeneration' is a figurative expression, the sign being put for the thing signified—a figure relating to this subject, of constant recurrence in the New Testament (Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 5:26; Col. 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21); and the interpretation of it as affirming that the outward rite is the instrument, or means, of regeneration, is at variance with the scope of the passage, the analogy of Scripture, and the evident facts of human experience. It is evident, also, that this conclusion is equally certain if, with some interpreters, we translate the adjoined clause "*even the renewing of the Holy Ghost*," making it exegetical of the first clause; for in that case, *the washing of regeneration* is necessarily a figurative, and not a literal expression. **And the renewing of the Holy Ghost.** *Renewing* (*ἀναύωντος*)—if we regard the analogy of Rom. 12:2, as also of those passages in which the verb is used, 2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 4:23; Col. 3:10—refers to the work of sanctification, or the continuous renewal by the Spirit of that spiritual life in the soul which was begun in regeneration. 'Renewing' is simply the development and extension of regeneration, a continuous work of the Spirit within the soul, through which the new spiritual life advances toward complete supremacy and possession, permeating, purifying, and ennobling all the

6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;  
 7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

6 ing of the Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by his grace, we might be made

faculties of the man, until he is transformed into the full image of Christ. (2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:13.) These divine acts, *regeneration* and *renewing*, by which salvation is made effectual to our souls, are manifestations of the kindness and love of our Saviour God to us, which, the apostle argues, should lead us to show kindness and love to others.

**6. Which he shed on us abundantly (poured forth on us richly)**—thus fulfilling the promises of the Old Covenant respecting the pouring out of his Spirit. (Joel 2: 28-32; John 7:37-39.) *Spirit* (*πνεύμα*)—literally, signifies *breath, wind, or air in motion.* In accordance with this conception, the Holy Spirit is represented in a figurative usage, as *poured out* upon us, as of a liquid transfusing or flowing over us. (Acts 2:17, 18, 33.) In like manner we are said to be *baptized* or immersed in the Spirit, as the body is enveloped, pervaded by the air; as also, Christians are commanded to live, to walk, to pray “in the Spirit,” as the element in which the moral life exists and acts. In all these, the richness and fullness of the Spirit’s presence, and the power and completeness of his influence find expression. **Through Jesus Christ our Saviour**—as the medium through which the Spirit’s presence is secured to us. The coming of the Heavenly Comforter, in the fullness of his power, is the direct result of the sacrifice and intercession of Christ. Jesus said: “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth.” (John 14: 16, 26; 15: 26; 16: 7; Acts 2: 33; 2 Cor. 1: 21, 22.) Observe the presence and agency of the whole Trinity in the work of our salvation. It has its source in “the kindness and love-to-man of the Father,” “who shed on us the Holy Ghost abundantly”; it comes “through Jesus Christ our Saviour,” who “died for us,” and “ever liveth to make intercession for us”; and it is made effectual in the soul “by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

**7. That**—expressing the design of God in saving us through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was given for conviction of sin and the inward revelation of

Christ (John 16: 8, 14), thus leading to faith and consequent justification. **Being justified by his grace.** Justification, with Paul, is not negative merely, the non-imputation of sin, freedom from guilt; but therein the soul is divinely declared righteous, as clothed with all the righteousness of Christ; and it is precisely in this new and exalted relation, as a justified soul, is developed a new and holy character and life. Justification, therefore, can never be disjoined from sanctification, as the apostle shows in Rom. 6. It originates in the free, unmerited favor of God, and even the faith which appropriates it is “the gift of God.” (Rom. 3: 24; 5: 15; 11: 5, 6; Eph. 2: 8-10.) **We should be made heirs.** Justification, with its holy fruits, is essential to a consciousness of the adoption, which makes us children, and consequently “heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.” (Rom. 8: 14-17.) It was promised to Abraham that he “should be the heir of the world” (Rom. 4: 13), because from him Christ should arise, who was appointed “heir of all things” (Heb. 1: 2), and through whom the glorious inheritance of eternal life shall be given to all believers (Gal. 3: 26-29; 4: 4-7); an inheritance of which the Christian has already “the earnest,” in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1: 14), and which, in its glory and perpetuity, is depicted as “an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away.” (1 Peter 1: 4.) **According to the hope of eternal life**—that is, “in pursuance of,” “agreeably to,” the hope of eternal life. The grand inheritance in prospect for believers is eternal life, which, though now possessed in its beginnings, is set before them as an object of hope, the goal of their earthly course (Rom. 8: 18-24), and of which, in the inconceivable wealth of its meaning, they have been constituted heirs. (1: 2; Mark 10: 30; John 3: 16; 4: 14; 10: 28; Acts 13: 46; Rom. 6: 22; 1 Tim. 6: 12.) “We thank this grace that, instead of being delivered by our guilt to eternal death, we have come into such relation to God as to be heirs of eternal life. For we should not have received the Holy Spirit, restoring us anew to a holy life,—with the reception of whom we entered into heirship of eternal life,—had it not been for the grace of Christ, by

8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

8 <sup>1</sup>heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Faithful is the saying, and concerning these things I will that thou affirm confidently, to the end that they who have believed God may be careful to <sup>1</sup> maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men; but shun foolish questionings, and genealogies, and strifes, and fightings about the law;

<sup>1</sup> Or, heirs according to hope of eternal life. . . . . 2 Or, profess honest occupations.

which we obtained that righteousness before God, which made us worthy of eternal life and of the Holy Spirit. . . . Without merit in us, God has redeemed us from the bondage of our former life in sin, and has given us the Holy Spirit, through whom we now stand in a new life; and if by virtue of that we are now heirs of eternal life, we owe this to the grace of Christ, through which we were made righteous before God." (Hofmann.)

Of this remarkable passage in ver. 3-7, Farrar has well said: "If any one were asked to fix on two passages which contained the essence of all Pauline theology, he would surely select Rom. 3: 21-26 and Titus 3: 5-7; and the latter, though less polemical, is in some respects the more complete."

**8-11. THIS DOCTRINE OF A GRATUITOUS SALVATION TO BE STRONGLY INSISTED ON AS AN INCITEMENT TO GOOD WORKS.—1.** The apostle wills that Titus strongly affirm this doctrine, in order that believers may be careful to maintain good works; but foolish controversies and genealogies and strifes about the law he is to avoid, as useless and hurtful. (8, 9.) 2. A schismatic, after a first and second admonition, he is to shun; since, by refusing to yield to admonition, such an one is shown to be perverted, and to be sinning although self-condemned. (10, 11.)

**8. This is a faithful saying**—that is, the statement in ver. 4-7, as to God's gratuitous bestowal of salvation. 'Faithful': worthy of confidence, assuredly true. (1 Tim. 1: 15; 3: 1; 4: 9; 2 Tim. 2: 11.) **And (concerning) these things I will that thou affirm constantly (confidently)**—or, possibly *constantly insist*, "make them the constant subjects of thy preaching." Compare 1 Tim. 1: 7. **These things**: those which relate to the grace of God, just presented in ver. 5-7, which form the two motives to holy living. **That they which have believed in God**—a designation of the Cretan Christians, as distinguished from the heathen Cretans who believed false gods. Thus Lu-

ther: "those who have become believers in God." It of course involves the thought, though not directly expressing it, that they had believed God by receiving his gospel and publicly professing their faith in Christ. **May be careful to maintain good works**—or, as others, *be foremost, or excel in good works*. All true inspiration to a life of holy obedience comes from a sense of God's grace in saving us. "We love him [God] because he first loved us." (1 John 4: 19.) "The love of Christ constraineth us." (2 Cor. 5: 14.) The doctrines which unfold before men that marvelous self-moved grace, therefore, are to be strongly and constantly insisted on, to incite to a life of holiness. 'Be careful,' (*φορτίζωσον*): "reflect on something, take an interest in something; here, as often in the classics, with a suggestion of anxiety." (Huther.) The word, though used in the Septuagint, is not elsewhere found in the New Testament. 'Good works': not merely benevolence, but an honorable and holy life. **These things**—the doctrines which reveal God's infinite love to us in Christ, and in which thus lie the motives to a true obedience to him. **Are good and profitable unto men**—good in themselves, as great spiritual verities, and useful to men, as influencing to beneficent and holy living.

**9. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law.** 'Avoid,' *stand aloof from*; he is to have nothing to do with them. The apostle thus describes the subjects, methods and spirit of the discourses of the heretical teachers; which consisted in foolish questions, not worthy and often not possible to be answered, mystical interpretations of names in genealogical lists, and controversies in regard to minute and frivolous points in the Jewish law—matters of no practical moment, but tending to incessant strife. Repeated warnings against these frivolous and hurtful subjects of discourse are given in the Pastoral Epistles—

10 A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, **reject**;

11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus,

10 for they are unprofitable and vain. A factious man 11 after a first and second admonition <sup>1</sup> refuse; knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned.

12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *avoid*.

a fact that indicates probably one of the dangerous tendencies of that age, as, indeed, we might infer from the frivolous and superstitious character of it. See 1: 10-14; 1 Tim. 1: 4-7, and notes there; 6: 4-7; 2 Tim. 2: 23. The vapid, senseless questions often discussed in the Rabbinic writings perhaps give us the clearest conception of the utterly inane and worthless discourse here reprobated. **For they are unprofitable and vain**—useless and morally fruitless. They had no power to purify and elevate and ennable the heart and life.

**10. A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.** ‘A heretic’: one who is not only false in doctrine, but factious in spirit and conduct; a fomentor of strife and divisions, a maker of schisms. The noun (*ἀἵρετος*), from which heretic is derived, is used in the New Testament, as designating not so much a doctrinal error, *heresy*, as a faction, division, schism, sect, although more or less of error is supposed, as the basis of the division (Acts 5: 17; 15: 5; 24: 5, 14; 26: 5; 28: 22; 1 Cor. 11: 9; Gal. 5: 20); and in some cases an organized form of error is the main thought. (Acts 24: 14; 2 Peter 2: 1.) The exhortation here is similar to that in Rom 16: 17. “Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have received, and avoid them.” Such a person he is first to admonish, and, if necessary, to repeat the admonition: a procedure which, in accordance with Matt. 18: 15-17, perhaps indicates the ordinary method in cases of discipline, and at least shows that the offender is to be carefully and patiently convinced of his fault, and, if possible, to be reclaimed from it. If these admonitions fail, Titus is not to contend with the schismatic, but to reject him. ‘Reject’—literally, *excuse thyself from, shun*. Compare Luke 14: 18, 19; 1 Tim. 4: 7; 2 John 10: 11. The word does not directly enjoin the exclusion of the offender from the church, but rather, that he be avoided, that his society be shunned: but, connected here as it is with the usual disciplinary admonitions, it certainly

suggests this as, at least, the ultimate result. Self-opinionative and vain, he has refused to be won by kindness and argument; and now, instead of gratifying his self-importance by the notoriety of a public controversy, Titus is to shame him by leaving him unnoticed. Factious men and foolish errors are sometimes pushed into prominence by being controverted; whereas, if they were shunned, thoroughly let alone, they would of themselves come to nought. A very different rule of action is given in cases where the error is, not as in this case, *foolish* but vital, affecting fundamental truth, or where the offense constitutes a plain breach of morality. (1 Cor. 5: 1-13; 1 Tim. 1: 19, 20.)

**11. Knowing**—or, *since thou knowest*, by the failure of thy admonitions. **That he that is such is subverted**—turned out of the true way. (1 Tim. 1: 6; 5: 15; 2 Tim. 4: 4.) The ill success of the admonitions showed that his error was not one of the head, which argument might correct, but one of the heart, which argument might only intensify. **And sinneth, being condemned of himself (self-condemned).** The meaning here is not clearly settled; but probably it is either: 1. He habitually lives in sin, in spite of the condemnation of his own conscience. The conscience has become so perverted, that, though knowing himself to be wrong, he still persists in a false way. (Rom. 1: 32; 1 Tim. 4: 2.) “The aggravating circumstance is not that the man condemns himself *directly and explicitly*, as this might be a step to recovery, but that he condemns himself *indirectly and implicitly*, as acting against the law of his mind, and doing in his own particular case what in the general he condemns.” (Ellicott.) Or, 2. He habitually lives, not only in error, but in sin, and his own evil character and life, therefore, condemn him.

**12-15. CLOSING DIRECTIONS AND SALUTATIONS.**

**12. When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus.** Artemas is not elsewhere mentioned, and nothing is certainly known of

be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

13 Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.

14 And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

cus, give diligence to come unto me to Nicopolis: for there I have determined to winter. Set forward Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them. And let our people also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

1 Or, *profess honest occupations*. . . . . 2 Or, *wants*.

him; Tychicus, a native of Asia, accompanied Paul from Greece to Asia, on the third mission (Acts 20:4); bore the epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon to Asia, in company with Onesimus, during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7-9), in which epistles he is described as "a beloved brother and faithful in the Lord"; and again, during Paul's second Roman imprisonment, he is sent by him to Ephesus, apparently to take the place of Timothy there. (2 Tim. 4:12.)

**Give diligence (hasten) to come unto me to Nicopolis.** Three cities of this name existed within the sphere of Paul's work, one in Cilicia, another in Thrace, and a third in Epirus. The last, a city built by Augustus in commemoration of his victory at Actium, and hence called *city of victory*, is commonly supposed to be the one here referred to. **For I have determined there to winter.** He does not say *here*, but *there*. It is plain, therefore, that he had not yet reached Nicopolis, and that this Epistle was not written from that city, as the subscription falsely states. Artemas and Tychicus were evidently, like Timothy and Titus, evangelists assisting Paul in his widely extended missionary work; and it was the apostle's intention to send one of them to take Titus' place in Crete, so as to permit him to come to Paul at Nicopolis, where he would pass the winter. Titus' work in Crete, therefore, was purely temporary, and the statement of the subscription, that he was "first bishop of the Cretians," has no basis, either in the New Testament or in authentic history. It is wholly inconsistent with all the known facts.

**13. Bring Zenas, the lawyer, and Apollos on their journey diligently.** The name Zenas, is a contraction of Zenodoras. Whether he was a Roman or a Jewish lawyer cannot be determined, as he is not elsewhere mentioned; possibly he was a Jew, who, after embracing Christ, was still called after his former occupation, as scribe or lawyer. (Matt. 22:35.) An apocryphal book, entitled "The Life and Acts

of Titus," is ascribed to him. Apollos was a Jew of Alexandria, a disciple of John the Baptist, eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures; whom Aquila and Priscilla taught "the way of the Lord more perfectly" at Ephesus, and who subsequently preached with great power at Corinth and throughout Achaia. (Acts 18:24-28.) He labored much with Paul (1 Cor. 16:12); but, though differing in gifts from the apostle, he did not, as some affirm, differ from him in spirit or in doctrine (1 Cor. 3:3-10), as is evident here from Paul's injunction respecting him. Probably Zenas and Apollos were soon to enter upon a missionary journey, in the course of which they expected to visit Crete. **That nothing be wanting unto them**—that is, for the speeding and comfort of their journey. He is to hasten forward their journey, by seeing that their needs for it were supplied. (3 John 6; Acts 15:3; Rom. 15:24; 1 Cor. 16:6, 11.)

**14. And (but) though enjoining this on thee, the burden should not fall on thee alone. Let ours also (of the Cretan churches) learn to maintain good works for necessary uses**—that is, for the needs of Zenas, Apollos, and others, thus laboring in missionary work. The brethren of the Cretan churches should supply the necessities of these missionaries on their journey; a direction which shows that not only were the elders to be supported by the churches (1 Tim. 5:12, 13), but also the itinerant ministry, such as these evangelists assisting Paul in missionary labors. It was made a part of Titus' duty, to cultivate in them this missionary spirit, and train them in giving for the spread of the gospel. Missionary journeys, such as Zenas and Apollos were performing, involved expense, and this was to be borne by the churches. (Acts 15:3; 2 Cor. 11:8; Phil. 4:16; 3 John 5, 8.)

**That they be not unfruitful.** This they should do, not only to supply the expenses and needs of the missionaries, but still more, for their own spiritual life, as developing in them the grace of holy benevolence. This is a chief end in giving, as presented in Scripture. Covetousness, as a concentrated

15 All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.

15 All that are with me salute thee. Salute them that love us in faith. Grace be with you all.

form of selfishness, is a sin so insidious and deadly, that, whenever it becomes a governing characteristic, it excludes the soul from the kingdom of God. (Luke 12:15; Rom. 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:11; 6:10; Col. 3:5.) One of the highest duties, therefore, of the ministry is to cultivate in men an unselfish benevolence. (2 Cor. 8:1-9; 9:6-15; Phil. 4:15-19.)

**15. All that are with me salute thee**—referring probably to Paul's fellow laborers, who were at present with him, and who, as well known to Titus, are not mentioned by name. **Greet them that love us in the faith.** 'In the faith'—the sphere, or element, of their love. They loved him as a Christian. The bond of their affection, the element in which it lived, was their common faith.

"Love is represented as having its root in faith, this again as the bond of fellowship." (Wiesinger.) Christian faith is the enduring basis of true friendship; for souls united in that are united in common to Christ himself, and are thus in eternal union, bound ever more closely in the bonds of an everlasting friendship. **Grace be with you all**—a comprehensive benediction, invoking God's free, rich favor on Titus and on all associated with him. **Amen**—not found in the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, Ephraem, and other old manuscripts, and omitted by the best editors. The subscription is here, as in other epistles, spurious; and in this place it is at variance with the plain facts of the Epistle, as shown in the notes on verse 12.



# INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

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## THE GENUINENESS.

The private character and the brevity of this Epistle would naturally make it slow in coming to the notice of the churches; yet there are indications in the Epistles of Ignatius that, even as early as the period of the Apostolical Fathers, it had become known among the Pauline Epistles. It is acknowledged as such in the Muratorian Canon, in the last half of the second century. Tertullian and Origen, near the beginning of the third century, and Eusebius and Jerome, in the fourth, all either name it among the epistles of Paul, or quote from it as such. Its genuineness seems to have been commonly admitted in antiquity; but, in the fourth century, some objected to giving it a place in the Canon, because of its purely personal character, its brevity, and especially its lack of doctrinal significance, objections which Jerome, Chrysostom, and Theodore of Mopsuestia notice and refute. The internal evidence is all in its favor; throughout, it breathes the spirit and bears the mark of Paul. The remarkable and evidently undesigned coincidences in it with the Epistle to the Colossians have been pointed out by Paley, and utterly exclude the supposition of forgery. ("Horæ Paulinæ," Chapter XIV.) German criticism has, however, assailed this, as it has the other epistles of the first Roman imprisonment. Baur, with the Tübingen school in general, places it among the doubtful epistles. But the grounds on which they base this doubt of its Pauline authorship,—such as the occurrence in it of some unusual words, etc.,—if used in testing literature in general, would set aside as spurious a large number of the best authenticated works of our own and of former times. So clearly does the letter exhibit the personal characteristics of the apostle, and so marked are the minute and undesigned coincidences with Paul's acknowledged writings, and with the facts of his life, that the internal evidence leaves absolutely no room for doubt, on any grounds which either sound criticism or ordinary common sense would justify. It would be far more difficult to account for the manifest presence of Paul's heart and head and hand in a forged epistle, than to account for a few new words, which common sense at once explains as natural and necessary in an epistle dealing with a subject unusual in its character and scope.

## THE PERSON ADDRESSED AND THE OCCASION.

Philemon was a resident at Colosse in Phrygia; for Onesimus, his slave, belonged there, and Archippus, who is here addressed with Philemon, is alluded to as a minister there. (Ver. 2; Col. 4:9, 17.) Whether he filled an office in the Colossian Church is uncertain, as Paul speaks of him only as a "fellow-worker," which need not imply official station; but he was distinguished for his high religious character and his generous hospitality to the saints. Probably he was a man of substance, as his house was one of the meeting places of the church in Colosse, a fact which suggests that it was spacious, such

as only the wealthier classes occupied. (2.) His conversion doubtless occurred under the ministry of Paul, since the apostle, in making his appeal for the slave, says to Philemon, "Thou owest unto me even thine own self besides." (19.) If, as is generally supposed, Paul had not as yet personally visited Colosse, it is a natural supposition, that Philemon had come to Ephesus, the metropolis of Western Asia Minor, and had there been converted by the instrumentality of the apostle. (Acts 19:10, 26.) The resulting friendship was warm and enduring, leading to constant mutual remembrance in prayer. (4.) In regard to the others to whom the Epistle is addressed, it is supposed that Apphia was the wife of Philemon, and that Archippus, spoken of elsewhere as a minister, was his son, and the association of their names with his, in addressing the household, certainly renders the conjecture not improbable.

Onesimus, the immediate occasion of the Epistle, was a slave of Philemon. He had, apparently, in some way, wronged his master, and had fled to Rome, where, in the slums of the thronged metropolis of the world, he doubtless hoped to elude pursuit. In some way now unknown, he came in contact with the apostle, then a prisoner in Rome, and was converted. (Acts 28:30, 31.) A warm mutual attachment resulted, and to the imprisoned apostle the fugitive slave became, not only very dear, but probably in many ways useful. Paul would gladly have retained him; but, though he does not doubt that Philemon, if he knew the circumstances, would grant him the service of Onesimus, he is unwilling to presume on this favor by anticipating it. Probably, also, Onesimus himself, now fully conscious of his wrong, desired to return, and make confession and reparation. But at that period, such a course might involve serious hazard to the slave; torture, or even death, might be the result at the hands of a cruel and irritated master. In sending Onesimus, therefore, Paul not only commended him to the whole Colossian Church, as "the faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you" (Col. 4:9), but also wrote to Philemon this marvelously forceful and touching appeal in behalf of the now penitent and returning servant. The courtesy, delicacy, and tact of the Epistle have been admired in all ages, and render it in its pathos and beauty unapproached in epistolary literature. Among the numerous private epistles which have come down to us from antiquity, while there are many that exhibit great wealth of thought and polish of style, with much of sparkling wit, all fall far below this in nobility and elevation of sentiment, and breadth and tenderness of sympathy for man as man. In that age of slavery, when more than half the Roman world were in bondage, bought and sold as chattels and without rights in law, the apostle, looking beyond artificial, earthly distinctions, sees all redeemed men, whatever their social position, as one in Christ Jesus, equal before God, bound each to the other in the bonds of sacred, eternal brotherhood. From this high standpoint, which was unknown to ancient heathenism, but forms the distinctive social characteristic of Christianity, he pleads with the master for a once erring, but now penitent offender, belonging to the despised downtrodden class. The Epistle of Pliny the Younger, written to a friend, near the close of the first century, in behalf of an offending freedman, is one of the noblest utterances of heathen literature, and has often been compared with this; but beautiful as it is, and, in the original, faultless in style, the whole conception of the illustrious heathen is far inferior to that of the apostle. The following is a translation:

"Caius Pliny to Sabinianus, health: Thy freedman, with whom thou saidst thou wast incensed, came to me, and falling at my feet, as if at thine, clung to them. He wept much, much he entreated, and much was the force of his silence. In short, he fully satisfied me of his penitence. Truly I believe him to be reformed, because he is sensible

of his wrong. Thou art angry, I know ; and thou art angry justly, this also I know ; but clemency has then the highest praise, when there is the greatest cause for anger. Thou hast loved the man ; and I hope, thou wilt love him. Meanwhile it is sufficient that thou suffer thyself to be entreated. It will be right for thee to be angry with him again, if he shall deserve it, because having once yielded to entreaty, thine anger will be the more just.

" Forgive something in view of his youth. Forgive on account of his tears. Forgive for the sake of thy own kindness. Do not torture him, lest thou torture also thyself ; for thou wilt be in torture, when thou, who art so gentle, shalt be angry. I fear lest, if to his prayers I should unite my own, I should seem not to ask, but to compel. Yet I will unite them, and the more fully and abundantly in that I have very sharply and severely reproved him, strictly threatening that I will never hereafter intercede for him. This I said to him, because it was necessary to alarm him ; but I do not say the same to thee. For perchance I shall intercede again, and shall again obtain ; only that my request be such as it befits me to ask and thee to grant. Farewell."

#### SLAVERY IN THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

At this period, more than half the population of the Roman Empire were slaves. Servile insurrections of great magnitude had occurred, which threatened to upheave and destroy the foundations of society and government. The Romans lived in constant fear of these outbreaks ; and the most stringent and cruel laws chained down this vast body of bondmen. The slave had no rights in law. Absolutely under the master's control, he could be tortured, maimed, crucified, or thrown to the wild beasts at his cruel caprice. The servile population formed an ever restless, seething, muttering volcano beneath the fabric of society, which might burst forth with terrible devastation at any moment. Roman law decreed, that if a master had been slain by a slave, the whole body of slaves in his household should be put to death. Only three years before Paul wrote this letter, a citizen having been thus assassinated, four hundred slaves composing his household, men, women, and children, though well known to be innocent of the crime, were relentlessly led to death. Such terrible examples were thought necessary to repress this servile element, and protect the masters.

What was the attitude of the gospel toward this gigantic evil? Plainly, it did not proclaim a crusade against slavery as a civil institution ; this would only have been, in these circumstances, to excite these oppressed masses to bloody and anarchical revolution. Nothing is more evident than the presence of slaves in Christian families in the apostolic age, and the requirement of Scripture, enjoining obedience to the master. Christianity did not strike at once and directly at the civil relation. But it lifted both master and slave into a new relation to Christ, making them equal before God, equal in the church, and equal as citizens and heirs of the heavenly kingdom ; and this great fact, as its significance came to be felt, changed the actual relation of master and slave, even where the formal, outward civil relation remained. Hence Philemon is not commanded to manumit Onesimus, but to receive him, no longer merely "as a servant ; but above a servant, a brother beloved." It is easy to see that, as the gospel interpenetrated the social life, and created a Christian civilization, this change in the moral and spiritual relation of the parties would lead to a change in the civil relation, and master and slave, from the first unknown in the Church, would also cease to be known in the State. The chief significance of this Epistle for all the ages is, that *in Christ Jesus there is neither bond nor free* ; that

Christianity means the moral and spiritual equality of all men before God and his church ; and that consequently, as it enters and purifies and uplifts the race, there must come, through this Christian civilization, as the ultimate result, the equality of all men before the civil law. The Epistle thus touches the profoundest social questions of all ages and all lands.

#### THE TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING.

The Epistle was written during the apostle's first imprisonment at Rome, A. D. 60-63 : and, as he expresses an expectation of speedy liberation, its date may probably be placed near the close of this period, A. D. 62 or 63. Tychicus, when departing for Asia, bearing the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, was accompanied by Onesimus ; and the apostle sends this letter to insure the repentant fugitive a kind reception and full pardon. The Epistle is, therefore, to be studied in connection with the group of epistles belonging to the first Roman imprisonment.

#### LITERATURE OF THE EPISTLE.

The helps on this brief Epistle are very abundant and full ; only the more recent and important will be here named. Among the best expositions are Wiesinger's, in Olshausen's "Commentaries ;" Meyer's, in his "New Testament Commentary," and Van Oosterzee's in Lange's "Commentary" ; all of which are now by translation accessible to the English reader. Van Oosterzee's, in Lange, is edited by the late Dr. Hackett, who has made additions of great value. Among modern English commentators may be specially named, Alford, Ellicott, and Lightfoot. The last named, in his "Commentary on Colossians and Philemon," has added much to the literature of the subject, and produced a work very rich in learning and exegetical value. Farrar's "Life and Work of St. Paul" should also be mentioned, it being quite full and valuable in its notice and analysis of this Epistle.

# THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

PAUL, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy *our brother*, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow labourer,

2 And to *our* beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in thy house:

1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy <sup>1</sup>*our brother*, to Philemon <sup>2</sup>*our beloved* and fellow-  
2 worker, and to Apphia <sup>2</sup>*our sister*, and to Archippus  
our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house:

1 Gr. *the brother*.....2 Gr. *the sister*.

## 1-3. ADDRESS AND GREETING.

**1. Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ**—not barely a prisoner for the sake of Christ, in bonds on account of his cause, but *Christ Jesus' prisoner*. In other epistles he appears as Christ's servant: here he is Christ's prisoner, as appointed by Christ to serve in that relation. “Whom Christ has placed in bonds.” (Meyer.) (Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 2 Tim. 1:8.) He does not speak of himself as an apostle, because it is a private letter, and he does not here wish to command, but rather to entreat. ‘A prisoner’: “How could Philemon resist an appeal which was penned within prison walls, and by a manacled hand!” (Lightfoot.) **And Timothy our (the) brother.** Paul usually associates his assistants with him in his epistles; and in this instance, perhaps, it is to add to the force of the appeal, as Timothy was with Paul during the three years at Ephesus, and must have been well known by Philemon. *The brother*: the well-known brother. **Unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow labourer**—not elsewhere mentioned, but, from his association here with Archippus, it is probable that he was a member of the church at Colosse, and one with whom Paul had labored either there or at Ephesus. It is not certain that he was a minister, although the title ‘fellow laborer’ is often applied to ministers (2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25; Col. 4:11), but it is certainly not restricted to them. (Rom. 16:3.) The relation between Paul and him was evidently one of tender affection; and, indeed, his character was such that the apostle styles him the ‘beloved,’ expressive probably of the general sentiment toward him.

**2. And to our beloved Apphia**—better, as the Revised Version, to *Apphia our (the) sister*—possibly the wife of Philemon; she is not elsewhere mentioned. The name occurs often in this form in Phrygian inscriptions; a

fact which serves to confirm the genuineness of the epistle. As the return of the slave was a matter that concerned the whole household, it was natural that the mistress should be addressed as well as the master: her influence, also, might be important in leading Philemon to a right decision. ‘Our beloved’: the oldest manuscripts, as the Sinaitic, Alexandrian, Claromontanus, read *the sister*, a reading in itself more probable, and adopted by most editors. **And Archippus our fellow soldier**—probably a pastor of the church in Laodicea, a short distance from Colosse, as he is mentioned in immediate connection with that church in Col. 4:17. This, however, is not certain: the mention of him here, in connection with Philemon's household, seems to suggest Colosse as his residence, and certainly makes it possible that “the ministry he had received in the Lord” was fulfilled in Colosse. He is supposed to have been Philemon's son. ‘Fellow soldier’: as, like Paul, engaged in conflict for the gospel (Phil. 2:25; 2 Tim. 2:3), and possibly as having labored with Paul and Timothy during the three years residence in Ephesus, A. D. 55-57. **And to the church in thy house**—“the section of the Christians at Colosse which met in his house.” (Meyer.) Of church edifices as such we have few, or perhaps no authentic records before the close of the second century. Before that time, Christians met apparently in private houses or such public rooms as might be made available for purposes of worship. (Acts 18:6; 19:8-10; 28:30.) Probably in the houses of the wealthier church members there were rooms large enough for such gatherings. Thus we read in Col. 4:15, of “Nympha and the church which is in his house,” and also of Aquila and Priscilla, as, both at Corinth and at Ephesus, having a church in their house (Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 16:19); meaning, not the whole church in

3 Grace to you, and peace; from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,

3 Grace to you, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 I thank my God always, making mention of thee

these cities, but a section of it, a house congregation, precisely as in a large or scattered church now, portions of it meet for social worship in different neighborhoods. (Acts 12: 12; 16: 40; Rom. 16: 14, 15.) Possibly some of the slaves of Philemon, who formed a part of his household, were members of the church, and it might be desirable, as Chrysostom suggests, to conciliate them, and awaken in them proper sentiments toward the returning fugitive. Hence, not the master only, but the whole family, the wife, son, and slaves, so far as they are Christians, are addressed, and the appeal is made to the hearts of all in behalf of Onesimus. At the same time he could not address them separately as slaves, both because an appeal to them in such a connection might be offensive to the master, and because, as the same Father adds, "the church knows not the distinction of master and slave" (Gal. 3: 28); hence he addressed the section of the church meeting with Philemon and including his Christian slaves. In another epistle, sent at the same time, he commends Onesimus to the whole church. (Col. 4: 9.)

**3. Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ**—the usual form of invocation in all the Pauline Epistles, except First and Second Timothy and Hebrews. 'Grace': the free, unmerited favor of God, through which salvation is bestowed. 'Peace': that salvation as experienced in the soul. The former designates the source of salvation, God's free, self-originated favor; the latter, the result of salvation, as subjectively realized in the soul, in a new life of peace with God. The union of Christ with the Father in such an invocation, making him alike with the Father, the source of 'grace' and 'peace,' could only be impious, if the apostle did not regard him as one in nature and equal with God the Father.

**4-7. THANKSGIVING FOR PHILEMON'S LOVE AND FAITH.**—1. The apostle gives thanks to God always for him, making mention of him in his prayers, through occasion of the reports that come respecting his love to Christians and faith toward Christ. (4, 5.) 2. The purport of his prayer for him is that

the exercise of kindness to the saints, which his faith had prompted, might lead to the full development in him of all those possibilities of excellence of character, which, by God's grace, are in us, and thus Christ be glorified in him. (6.) 3. The motive or subjective grounds of the prayer is the joy and consolation Paul experienced by occasion of Philemon's love, in that the hearts of the saints are refreshed by him. (7.)

**4. I thank my God**—compare the very similar thought and expression (Rom. 1: 8-10; 1 Cor. 1: 4; Phil. 1: 3, 4; 1 Thess. 1: 2, 3; 2 Thess. 1: 3), 'My God': "it is the privilege of good men that in their praises and prayers they come to God as *their* God; 'Our God we thank thee,' said David, and 'I thank my God,' said Paul." (Henry.) "In thus thanking God for what Philemon was, we see the apostle's habit of recognizing the graces of Christians as the fruits of grace." (Hackett.) **Making mention of thee always in my prayers.** The manner in which his thankfulness found expression: it was in thankful intercession for him. (1 Ph. 1: 15, 16.) Note the unselfish and all comprehending character of Paul's prayers. So broad was his spiritual sympathy, that he daily spread out before God the condition and needs of the multitude of churches and of fellow laborers, with whom he was connected as spiritual leader, evidently mentioning them by name, and entering into their circumstances and special necessities with great particularity. Compare the passages above cited. Thus Luther, in the most exciting and crowded epochs of his career, when the cause of the Reformation throughout Germany lay on his heart, is said to have spent three hours daily in prayer. Our Lord himself, amidst the intense and blessed activities of his wonderful life, probably often "continued the whole night in prayer," or, "rising up a great while before day, departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." Nor was this the outpouring of a mere ecstatic devotion; his people and their needs formed the subject of these solitary pleadings (Luke 22: 32; John 17: 20); and these intercessions, begun on earth, he continues evermore before the throne in heaven. (Rom. 8: 24; Heb. 9:

5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;

6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.

5 in my prayers, bearing of <sup>1</sup> thy love, and of the faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints; that the fellowship of thy faith may become effectual in the knowledge of every good thing which is in <sup>2</sup> you, unto Christ. For I had much joy and comfort in thy love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through thee, brother.

1 Or, *thy love and faith*.....2 Many ancient authorities read *us*.

25; 1 John 2:1.) In sympathy with Christ, the apostle, in like manner, bore upon his heart before God the needs not only of the churches in general, but of the individual souls with whom he was placed in more immediate contact.

**5. Hearing**—or, *while I hear, or, am (often) hearing*, perhaps from Onesimus, Epaphras, who was then in Rome (Col. 1:7; 4:12), and other disciples from Colosse. This clause expresses the occasion of Paul's thanksgiving and prayer: he was constantly hearing of Philemon's steadfastness and generous hospitality and kindness to the saints. **Of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints.** The clauses here are transposed, making the figure called *chiasm*, which might readily occur in an informal, friendly letter, especially in a writer like Paul, in whom thought often outruns expression, and several thoughts seem to be struggling for utterance at the same moment. The logical order is: While I hear of thy faith toward Christ and of thy love unto all the saints. The occasion of his thanksgiving and prayer for Philemon is the constant report of Philemon's Christian character and kindness. (Col. 3:3, 4; 3 John 2:6.)

**6. That**—connected with ver. 4, as expressing the end or purport of the prayer. **The communication of thy faith**—that is, the liberality or kindness shown to the saints, which is the fruit of thy faith. See Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:4; 9:13; Phil. 1:5; Heb. 13:16), in all which this word (*κοινωνία*) is used in the sense of *contribution*, the imparting of one's good to others. **May become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus**—better, as in the Revised Version, *in the knowledge of every good thing which is in you, unto Christ*—that is, in the full recognition and consequent possession of every grace and power that the Holy Spirit has implanted in you, unto (the glory of) Christ. Nothing spiritu-

ally good dwells in us by nature (Rom. 7:18); but grace implants a new principle or potency of holiness (John 4:14; 1 John 3:8), which is to be developed in all moral and spiritual excellencies, to the glory of Christ. This new principle of holiness finds its development in the exercise of an unselfish Christian benevolence: this is the element in which it grows and reaches its full, blessed fruitage in a holy character. The apostle's prayer is, that, through the exercise of these offices of kindness to the saints by Philemon, which are prompted by his faith, he may attain the perfect knowledge (*ἐπιγνώσις*), the knowledge which comes by actual possession of every grace of experience and character which is made possible to us by the new spiritual nature that, through God's gift, is in us. Compare the parallel prayer, Phil. 1:9-11. "It is beautifully presupposed here that 'whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report,' they all (*πάντα ἀγαθά*) have their proper dwelling place and home in the bosoms of Christians, and that it is their duty, as it should be their glory, to furnish to the world the outward proof of this inner Christendom, and thus give, each one for himself, the evidence that the idea and the reality are not in his case separated from each other. It is thus that God is glorified. (Matt. 5:16.)" (Hackett.) 'In you': instead of this, most of the best manuscripts read *in us*, a reading adopted by nearly all editors. The Sinaitic, however, reads *in you*. *Unto Christ* (*εἰς Χριστόν*) is that to which a Christian is eternally dedicated, the goal of all his living, all his experience, all development of character—whatever he is or does, or aspires to be or to do, all has for its end the glory of Christ. (Titus 2:14.)

**7. For we have great joy and consolation in thy love**—or, *by occasion of thy love*—the subjective ground, or subordinate motive,

8 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,  
 9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech *thee*, being such a one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.  
 10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:

8 Wherefore, though I have all boldness in Christ to enjoin thee that which is befitting, yet for love's sake I rather beseech, being such a one as Paul <sup>1</sup> the aged, and now a prisoner also of Christ Jesus. I beseech thee for my child, whom I have begotten

<sup>1</sup> Or, *an ambassador, and now, etc.*

for this thanksgiving and prayer was the joy and consolation he found in the reports of Philemon's love to all the saints. (Phil. 4:1; Col. 2:5; 1 Thess. 2:19, 20; 3:9, 10.) 'We have'—the oldest manuscripts have, *I had*. **Because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by the brother.** 'The bowels'—or, more properly, the nobler viscera, regarded as the seat of the affections, *the heart*. The reference is, at least in part, to the hospitality which Philemon showed to the ministers of Christ on their missionary journeys. His large-hearted generosity and kindness had refreshed and cheered them in their work. (Titus 3:13; 3 John 6.) 'Brother'—placed last for emphasis of affection, and doubtless by its tender associations designed to prepare the way for the appeal which follows. Compare (in the Greek) Gal. 6:18.

**8-21. APPEAL OF PAUL TO PHILEMON IN BEHALF OF ONESIMUS, A FUGITIVE SLAVE, ENTREATING THAT HE WOULD RECEIVE HIM BACK WITH FAVOR.**

**I. 8, 9.** *Waiving his right, as an apostle to command, Paul, in deference to the claims of love, chooses rather to use entreaty, commanding it to his regard as coming from Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Christ. Wherefore*—that is, since I have these evidences of thy faith and love. **Though I might be much bold in Christ (by virtue of my relation to Christ) to enjoin thee that which is convenient (fitting).** He has authority as an apostle of Christ to lay as an injunction on Philemon that which is morally fitting; and he reminds him of this, in order to suggest that the request he is about to make is right and fitting in itself. "That which is ethically suitable—thus Paul makes that which he desires to obtain from Philemon, already to be felt as a duty." (Meyer.) **Yet for love's sake**—having respect to the claims of love. "It is not Philemon's love (ver. 5, 7), nor St. Paul's own love, but love absolutely, love regarded as a principle which demands a deferential respect." (Lightfoot.) **I rather beseech thee**—rather than com-

mand, which as an apostle was his right. **Being such a one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.** He adds force to the entreaty by presenting these two affecting facts in his personal condition: (a) He is 'Paul the aged'; and regard might well be felt to the request of an old servant of Christ, especially one from him who bore that loved name. It is not certain what Paul's precise age was at this time. But if, as is generally supposed, he had been a member of the Sanhedrin, he must have been considerably past thirty at his conversion A. D. 36; and as this Epistle was written A. D. 62, he would be, at the time of writing this Epistle, nearly or quite sixty. A life of severe toil and hardship, with constant bodily infirmities, had doubtless made him old in appearance and feeling at this age. Lightfoot, with less probability, translates: *Paul, an ambassador*, and takes these two clauses as giving the ground of his authority to command; adducing in support of this view Eph. 6:20, "an ambassador in bonds," and several instances where this word (*πρεσβύτης*) is used for an *ambassador*. Thus, also, Westcott and Hort. (b) He is now 'a prisoner of Jesus Christ'; being now in bonds at Rome for the sake of his Master, and entitled to special consideration as thus suffering for the gospel.

**II. 10-12.** *The apostle's appeal is for a spiritual child, begotten in his bonds. Onesimus, once, indeed, unprofitable, but now, by his changed character, profitable; whom he sends back, though, in so doing, he is sending his very heart. I beseech thee for my son, Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds*—rather, *for my child, whom I begat in my bonds, Onesimus.* Having thus favorably disposed the mind of Philemon, he now discloses the name of him for whom he intercedes; preparing the way for this, however, with two propitiatory considerations: (a) He is Paul's spiritual child, having been led to Christ by the apostle. (b) He was converted when Paul was in prison, and was thus spe-

11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:

12 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:

13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:

14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.

11 in my bonds, <sup>1</sup>Onesimus, who was aforesome unprofitable to thee, but now is profitable to thee and to me: whom I have sent back to thee in his own person, that is, my very heart: whom I fain would have kept with me, that in thy behalf he might minister unto me in the bonds of the gospel: but without thy mind I would do nothing; that thy goodness should not be as of necessity, but of free

<sup>1</sup> The Greek word means *Helpful*.

cially dear to him. ‘Begotten.’ Compare 1 Cor. 4:5, as also Gal. 4:19, where he likens his anxieties to the birth-pangs of a mother. ‘Onesimus’—the name signifies *useful, profitable*. He was a slave of Philemon, of Colosse, who had run away from his master, and at Rome had been converted. When sent back, in company with Tychicus, he is commended to the Colossian Church as “a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you.” (Col. 4:9.) **Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me**—a play on the significance of his name. Once he belied his name, in that, instead of *profitable*, he proved *unprofitable* to thee; but now, since his conversion, he justifies his name, by a spirit and conduct which make him *profitable*, and that, not only to thee, but also to me. “To his master he is now to be a benefit, since he serves him better than before; to the apostle, on the contrary, he is to be such, since he is a fruit of his labor, and to be his rejoicing in the day of Christ.” (Van Oosterzee.) Names among the Orientals are significant, expressive of something in their experience or character or prospects, and stress was often laid upon this significance. (Gen. 11:15; 32:28; Ruth 1:20.) **Whom I have sent again**—or, *sent back to thee in his own person*. Onesimus accompanied the letter. (Col. 4:9.) There is no evidence that he was sent back without his own consent; on the contrary, all the circumstances point to his own active concurrence in his return. **Thou, therefore, receive him, that is, mine own bowels**. The words: ‘Thou, therefore, receive him,’ of the Received Text, are wanting in the best manuscripts. With these omitted, it is as if he had said: “I have sent him back, though in sending him I am sending my very heart, so dear is he to me.” “The person beloved is called the heart itself, because he occupies so large a place in the affections.” (Hackett.)

**III. 13, 14. He would fain, indeed, have**

*retained Onesimus with himself, to render, in behalf of his master, service to him in his bonds, but would do nothing without Philemon's consent, that such a kindness, if done at all, might be, on the part of Philemon, not of necessity, but of free will. Whom I would have retained with me—or, could have wished to retain with me—or, “would fain have kept with me”—that is, if it had been proper, had it been best, thus to do. For this use of the Greek imperfect tense, called the inchoative imperfect, compare Acts 25:22; Rom. 9:3; Gal. 4:20. “The imperfect of this and similar verbs is not unfrequently used where the wish is stopped at the outset by some antecedent consideration which renders it impossible, and thus practically is not entertained at all.” (Lightfoot.) ‘I’—emphatic. I, on my part, could have wished. That in thy stead he might have ministered unto me.* In this long imprisonment, though “dwelling in his own hired house,” he was chained to a Roman soldier; and, thus fettered in his personal movements, he would need many services such as a devoted and helpful young man could render. ‘In thy stead’—he assumes that were Philemon there in person, he would gladly and gratefully render such service to him, since he owes him “even his own self.” (19.) **In the bonds of the gospel**—the bonds which his service in the gospel had occasioned—that gospel which had brought to Philemon eternal life. **But without thy mind would I do nothing.** He would not act on the mere assumption of Philemon's willingness; for, in that case, the *kindness* of Philemon, through the service rendered by Onesimus to Paul, might have seemed extorted, rather than freely bestowed. **That thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity**—as it might be, or at least, might seem to be, if he retained Onesimus on the assumption of Philemon's consent. **But willingly (of free will).** He will not have

15 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him for ever;

16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?

15 will. For perhaps he was therefore parted from thee for a season, that thou shouldst have him for ever; 16 no longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much rather to thee, both in the flesh and in the

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bondservant*.

Philemon's kindness, in granting the service of Onesimus to him, even appear as a matter of constraint, but will have it appear, as it would be in fact if accorded, a favor freely bestowed.

**IV. 15, 16. Reason for a kind reception of Onesimus, founded on the possible design of Providence in his flight; since it was, perchance, God's design, in the temporary separation of the slave, that, through his conversion, he might be restored to his master forever, no longer in the old relation of slave, but in the new and higher one of a Christian brother, dear to the apostle, but doubly dear to him. If, then, Philemon regards the apostle as a sharer with him in the gospel, he will receive Onesimus in such manner as he would receive Paul himself.** **For**—another reason for the cordial reception of Onesimus: Providence had marvelously interposed to overrule whatever had been wrong, and had thus presented a new aspect of the flight of the slave. Many recent interpreters regard the 'for' as presenting an additional reason for sending, rather than retaining, Onesimus; but, as this is only incidental it seems far more probable that Paul, after the digression (ver. 13, 14) resumes by this word, as so often in his epistles, the main course of his reasoning for the kind reception of the fugitive. **Perhaps he therefore departed for a season** (*was parted from thee for a season*) **that thou shouldst receive him forever**—receive him (*ἀπέχης*). "This peculiar word, as applied here to the new spiritual bond, was suggested perhaps by the civil relations of the parties to each other. It signifies to have in full, to possess exhaustively, and hence the meaning here is that Philemon, in gaining Onesimus as a Christian brother, had come into a relationship to him which made him all his own, and forever (*αιώνιον*)."<sup>1</sup> (Hackett.) 'For a season'—literally, *for an hour*—that is, for a very brief period, contrasted with 'forever.' Compare 2 Cor. 7:8; Gal. 2:5; 1 Thess. 2:17. It perhaps suggests that Onesimus had not been long parted from his master. The apostle conceives here of the

whole transaction, as seen from the standpoint of the divine purpose, as a part of God's providence; and hence he does not say, "on this account he fled," but, "on this account he was parted from thee." Thus Joseph, though sold into bondage by the wickedness of his brethren, when speaking of the transaction as a part of God's providential plan, says to them, "God did send me before you to preserve life." (Gen. 45:5.) Whatever the human motives in Onesimus' flight, God's providence, of which it formed a part, overruled it for his high purposes. The brief separation had resulted in Onesimus' salvation. He had left Colosse a wicked, ungodly man; he was returning a redeemed saint. The relation of master and slave, as before existing was temporary, terminating with death; the relation, as now existing, in its new and higher scope, when both were Christians, was eternal and indissoluble. **Not now as a servant (slave), but above a servant (slave), a brother beloved.** He would, indeed, have him as his own forever, but in a wholly changed relation. Though Onesimus might not be manumitted, and before the Roman law might remain a slave, yet he could no longer be to Philemon *as a slave*. The new and higher relation of a brother in Christ threw into the background, and made as of no account, the old and earthly relation; for in the brotherhood of the saints there is "neither bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all." (Col. 3:11.) The common union of master and slave to Christ made them morally equal, as one in him, and placed them on the same footing in the kingdom of God, as alike redeemed from sin and its power, and alike made heirs of the heavenly inheritance. **Specially to me—specially beloved**—as being his son in the faith, and as having ministered to him in his imprisonment. **But how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord**—as a member of thy household, and as a fellow believer in Christ. 'In the flesh, and in the Lord'—specifies the two domains in which Onesimus will be to him yet far more a beloved brother than to the apostle, namely,

17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.

18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee aught, put that on mine account;

19 I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it; albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord; refresh my bowels in the Lord.

17 Lord. If then thou countest me a partner, receive 18 him as myself. But if he hath wronged thee at all, 19 or oweth thee aught, put that to mine account; I Paul write it with mine own hand, I will repay it; that I say not unto thee how that thou owest to me 20 even thine own self besides. Yea, brother, let me have 1 joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my heart in Christ.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *help.*

*in the flesh*—that is, in the sphere pertaining to the *material* nature of man, in things consequently that concern the bodily life and needs, and *in the Lord*, that is, in the higher *spiritual life-sphere* of fellowship with Christ.” (Meyer.) **If thou count me therefore a partner**—that is, a partaker with thee of the Christian faith and hope. The word, in this relation, has the idea of an intimate friend, but one who is such in consequence of sharing, in common with the speaker, in the interests, feelings, and hopes of the gospel. The apostle thus distinctly makes the case of Onesimus his own, and asks his kind reception on the ground of the Christian friendship existing between himself and Philemon. **Receive him as myself**—receive him with all the favor, kindness, friendship with which thou wouldest receive me. “What joy would have entered the abode of Philemon, if the captive apostle had suddenly and unexpectedly stood before their eyes in the possession of his recovered liberty! Such a reception he now wishes that Onesimus may enjoy in the house of his master.” (Van Oosterzee.)

**V. 18-21.** *Whatever wrong or debt is chargeable to Onesimus, the apostle requests may be placed to his account, and promises, over his own signature, to make good; reminding Philemon, however, that, as indebted to him for the knowledge of Christ, he owes the apostle far more, even his own self, and closing with an expression of confidence that Philemon will do even more than is asked. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee aught.* ‘If’—not as if this were doubtful. It is the *if* of concession—seeing he has wronged thee. He concedes that Philemon had been wronged. **Put that on mine account.** Whether the wrong, or debt, here referred to consisted in a robbery of his master, the consequences of which Onesimus had sought to escape by flight, or consisted simply in the wrong done by his clandestine flight and the consequent loss of his service, cannot

be certainly determined. The hypothetical form in which it is presented is supposed by some to favor the latter supposition. But whatever the cause of the damage or debt, the apostle wishes it charged to himself, as to be made good by him. ‘Put that on mine account’—though his debt, nevertheless reckon it as mine. Compare the only other use of the verb (Rom. 5:13), where it is rendered *imputed*. Here the apostle asks that the debt, actually incurred by another, be *imputed*, reckoned to him.

**19. I Paul have written it with mine own hand. I will repay it.** He thus signs his name, as to a bond. In the same way, he attests his epistles by his signature. (1 Cor. 16:21; Col. 4:18; 2 Thess. 3:17.) In this instance, it is possible that the entire Epistle was written by his own hand; most of the others seem to have been penned by an amanuensis, Paul simply adding a few words to attest them. (Rom. 16:22.) **Albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.** Philemon had received the knowledge of salvation from Paul; he owed to the apostle, therefore, himself, in the highest sense, in all that belonged to his spiritual life and hope. Compare Luke 9:25. ‘Besides’—in addition to that which I have declared my readiness to pay. Paul had begotten him in the gospel, and he was indebted thus for his very being, as a Christian, to the apostle; a debt transcendently greater than any the slave could owe his master. The argument in this verse is serious and valid; but the delicate aroma of pleasantry with which it is invested suggests that the apostle, with all the weight of care resting on him, was not devoid of humor, to relieve the graver side of his character and give vivacity to his ordinary intercourse with others.

**20. Yea, brother, let me have joy (profit) of thee.** The emphasis is on *me*. He makes the cause of Onesimus his own; and Philemon, in receiving the fugitive kindly,

21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.  
 22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.

will be conferring favor, comfort, on Paul himself. *It is I*, not Onesimus, who will thus have profit, joy, from thee. *Profit*—alluding in the verb used (*ὑβαίνων*) to the name (Onesimus—*profitable*) of him for whom he is pleading. The verb is, in this case, all the more expressive in that it is commonly used to express the comfort, help, a parent should receive from a child. As if he had said: I send Onesimus (the profitable one) to thee; do thou, by thy Christian reception of him, send an Onesimus (profit) to me. Let me have joy, by knowing that, with true Christian nobleness, thou dost forgive his flight, and welcome him to thy heart as a brother in Christ. **In the Lord**—the sphere of the joy, or profit, he sought. It was not selfish and carnal, but spiritual joy. **Refresh my bowels in the Lord.** Paul's heart had been burdened in reference to this matter; he would receive refreshing, spiritual relief and comfort, in Philemon's cordial reception of the returning fugitive. The gravest consequences might follow an opposite course on the part of Philemon. A fugitive slave was generally treated with great cruelty. He was tortured, or maimed, or sent to the quarries and mines, or even crucified, at the command of an angry master. Such conduct in a Christian master would discredit the highest teachings of the gospel, and utterly misrepresent its spirit before the world. The moral and spiritual equality of master and slave in the church, also, would be seriously compromised, if Philemon refused to recognize the new relation in which Onesimus now stood as a brother in the Lord. The case of the returning Christian slave was, therefore, of most serious import, not simply as it affected Onesimus himself, but also as it stood related to the Christian religion before the world and in the church; and it might well lie as a burden on Paul's heart, till it was settled by Philemon's reception of Onesimus in the true spirit of the gospel and with the full recognition of his new position as a Christian.

**21. Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee.** He would not have Philemon feel that this urgency of en-

21 Having confidence in thine obedience I write unto thee, knowing that thou wilt do even beyond what I say.  
 22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I hope that through your prayers I shall be granted unto you.

treaty arose from distrust of his love and obedience; while yet, by the use of the word 'obedience' he delicately hints at his apostolic right to command. **Knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.** He is confident that his friend will even surpass in his kindness what has been asked. Whether this excess in Philemon's fulfillment of Paul's request refers to some special favor, not formally asked, as Onesimus' legal manumission, making him a freedman, cannot be determined. Alford, Hackett, and most commentators interpret the words, as probably hinting at manumission. Meyer and Ellicott quite decidedly dissent from this view. But whatever may be the fact as to the legal relation, Wordsworth has well said: "By Christianizing the master, the gospel enfranchised the slave. It did not legislate about mere names and forms, but it went to the root of the evil—it spoke to the heart of man. When the heart of the master was filled with divine grace, and was warmed with the love of Christ, the rest would soon follow. The lips would speak kind words; the hands would do liberal things. Every Onesimus would be treated by every Philemon as a beloved brother in Christ."

**22-25. CLOSING DIRECTIONS AND SALUTATIONS, WITH THE BLESSING.**

**22. But withal prepare me also a lodging.** Together with, and in addition to this kind reception of Onesimus, be preparing a lodging for me. "The request for such hospitality . . . would serve also indirectly to enforce Paul's application for Onesimus. Who could be willing to disappoint the beloved apostle, and compel him in person to see how little regard had been paid to his request?" (Van Oosterzee.) Thus also, Meyer, and most interpreters. It was Paul's original intention, after visiting Rome, to go thence to Spain (Rom. 15: 24, 25), but his plans have changed, as he is now expecting to go to Philippi (Phl. 2: 24), and also to Colosse. 'Lodging'—this may mean a lodging which should be hired for him, or an entertainment as guest at Philemon's house. Paul thus courteously refrained from assuming that his friend would entertain him, although this was doubtless the

23 There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus;  
 24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow laborers.  
 25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

23 Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, salute thee; and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow-workers.  
 25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *the*. . . . . <sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities omit *Amen*.

result. **For I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you—“given”—“liberated in favor of you.”** (Acts 3: 14; 27: 24.) The word denotes the granting of something in answer to a request. ‘Through your prayers’—the means through which the favor was obtained. (Acts 12: 5; 2 Cor. 1: 11; Phil. 1: 19; Col. 4: 3.) The expectation here expressed of release and of further missionary work, also appears in another epistle written about this time (Phil. 1: 19-26; 2: 24); and the probability is that, after the release, he actually visited these places, as here indicated.

**23. There salute thee.** The persons mentioned here, as sending salutations, are the same as those named in the Epistle to the Colossians, which accompanied ‘this; except in the omission here of “Jesus, which is called Justus.”’ (Col. 4: 10-14.) **Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus.** He was a presbyter of the church in Colosse, but was at this time with the apostle at Rome, and was apparently sharing his imprisonment. As in Colossians, he is called a “fellow laborer,” and **Aristarchus**, a “fellow prisoner,” it is possible, as Meyer suggests, that these attendants of Paul voluntarily took turns in ministering to him in his place of confinement (an arrangement quite conceivable in the freer position he enjoyed in this first Roman imprisonment, when he “dwelt in his own hired house”); and hence one at one time, and another at another, would be Paul’s “fellow prisoner.” Epaphras was an eminently useful and zealous servant of Christ, of whom the apostle, when commanding him to the Colossians, speaks, as a “dear fellow servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ,” “laboring fervently for you in prayers,” “having a great zeal for you, and for them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hieropolis.” He has been supposed to be the same as Epaphroditus, mentioned in Phil. 2: 15, as the name is the same, only abbreviated, but it seems fatal to this that Epaphroditus was not of Colosse but of Philippi, and had been sent to Rome from that city,

whereas Epaphras was sent there from Colosse. (Phil. 2: 25; Col. 1: 7; 4: 12.)

**24. Marcus**—John Mark, cousin of Barnabas (Acts 12: 12, 25), who accompanied Paul and Barnabas as far as Perga on the first mission, and was afterward refused by Paul, when proposed for the second mission. (Acts 13: 13; 13: 38.) Here, it is evident, he has been again admitted among the attendants of the apostle. Tradition holds him as the author of the second gospel. **Aristarchus**—a Thessalonian, who, with Gaius, was caught and dragged into the theatre by the mob at Ephesus, was with Paul when he returned from Corinth to Asia, and, accompanying him to Rome, is mentioned as a “fellow prisoner” with him there. (Acts 19: 29; 20: 4; 27: 2; Col. 4: 10.) **Demas**—a name here honorably associated with Paul’s fellow laborers in Rome; but, in the apostle’s second imprisonment there, he deserted him, “having loved this present world.” Whether this indicated permanent or only a temporary failure of his Christian life is uncertain. (2 Tim. 4: 10.) **Lucas**—the Evangelist Luke, author of the Third Gospel and of the Acts. He is called “the beloved physician”; and possibly as Paul’s health was suffering, especially on his second mission, when Luke comes first into connection with him, he may have acted as his physician, as well as fellow laborer. Singularly modest, he makes his presence or absence in the apostolic company known in the Acts only by the use of the pronoun of the first or the third persons; but it is evident that he spent a large part of his life with the apostle. (Col. 4: 14; 2 Tim. 4: 11.) See note in that place. **My fellow labours.** The wonderful power of Paul is seen in the attracting to himself, and the inspiring to evangelical work, of the large body of assistants, who are constantly either laboring with him, or performing service in different parts of the world under his direction.

**25. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.** The shorter benediction. (Gal. 6: 18; 2 Tim. 4: 22.) ‘Your spirit’:

the pronoun 'you' is plural, because including with Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, and the church in Philemon's house. (ver. 2.) It invokes on their spirit the free, rich favor of Christ, with all the fullness of blessing it brings. 'Amen': not in the authoritative manuscripts. The subscription here, as in the other epistles, has no authority.

"Among the old manuscripts there are two which record at the end that Onesimus had his legs broken on the rack on the cross at Rome,

and so gained the rewards of martyrdom. And with this thought, not perhaps historically confirmed, but so entirely in harmony with the vicissitudes of that age of the first confessors, we may turn our eyes from this record of lowly life on earth, upward to the scene where the Lord's servants, though they may have been the slaves of men, are exalted and ennobled forever on thrones which he has prepared for them." (Hackett.)







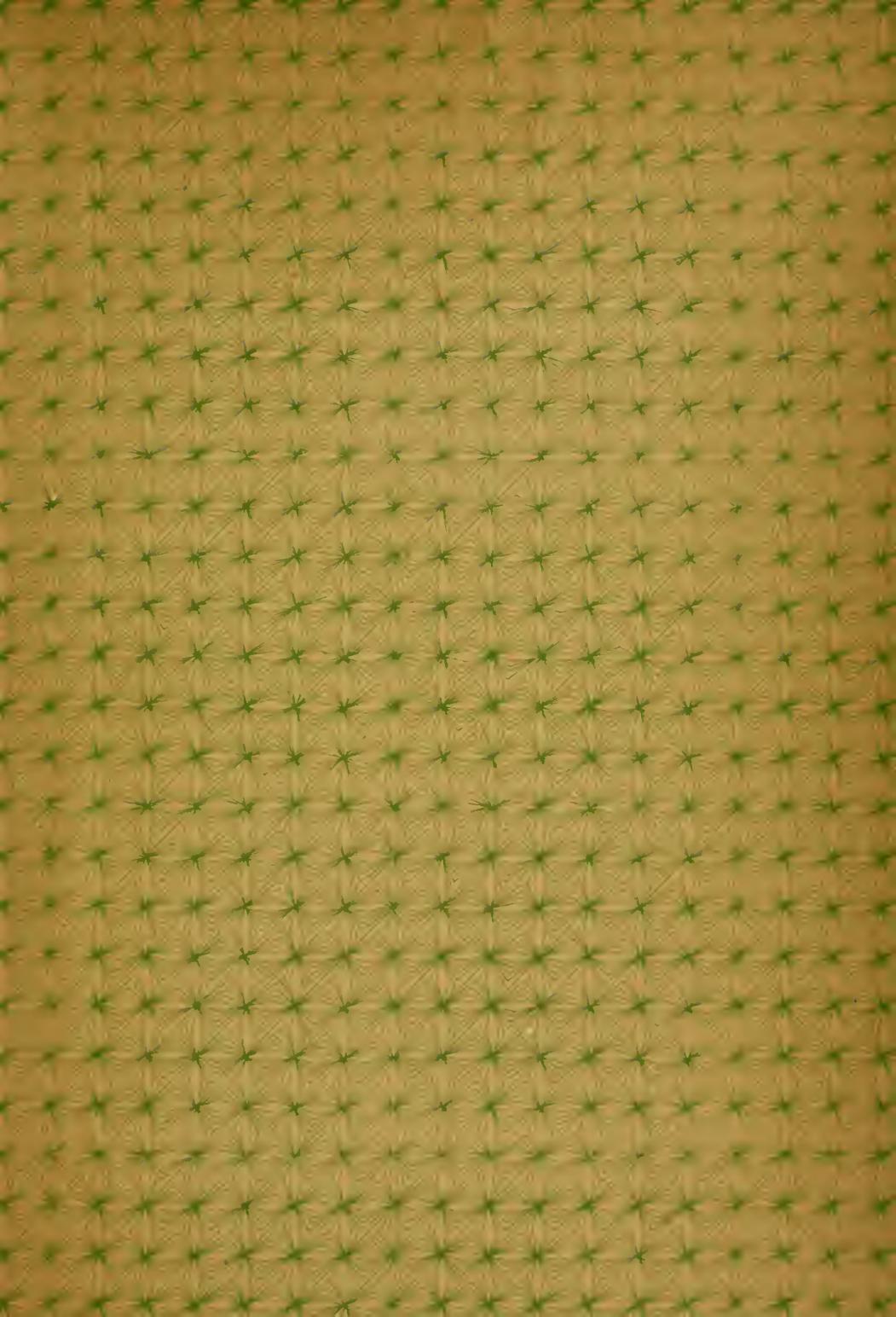
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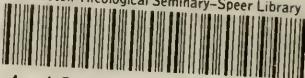




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